

Prices hit Caracas

CARACAS (AP) — Prices for furniture and appliances from stores in the capital soared Tuesday after the worst street violence in Venezuela in 30 years. Police estimated 25 people were killed in the Caracas area, most of them in the city. The violence, which began Monday and spread to at least seven cities and towns, continued into early Tuesday in some parts of Caracas, where streets were under virtual martial law with troops patrolling the streets. Some looting persisted on the outskirts. Independent reports estimated damage nationwide to be in the millions of dollars. On some Caracas streets, virtually every store was looted. "It is a popular uprising. There are riots everywhere. They are all furious," said metropolitan police Inspector Jose Lara Montilla, who commanded a unit armed with shotguns.

Jordan Times

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Army rejects Mahdi proposals

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese military chiefs put their troops on full alert Tuesday and rejected attempts by Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi to defuse their challenge to his government. "The armed forces would like to assert that all the contents of its memorandum dated Feb. 20, 1989, addressed to the supreme commander of the armed forces, (head of state Ahmed Ali Al Mirghani), and the chairman of the national defence council, (Mahdi), must be carried out," the armed forces general command said in a statement. But the statement added that the 60,000-strong army remained committed to democracy and the constitution. Sudan's generals last week gave Mahdi seven days to institute political reforms and either spend more money on defence or negotiate an end to the civil war in the south. Their ultimatum expired Monday. Defence sources said troops throughout the country and in Khartoum had been placed on full alert. "We gave the government an ultimatum to reply to our demands. It replied, and we rejected its reply. Now it will have to come up with a satisfactory answer," one source said.

King thanks Senate speaker

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable of thanks to Upper House of Parliament (Senate) Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, in reply to a congratulatory cable the Senate speaker sent to the King on the formation of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC). King Hussein stressed that "the blessed step of establishing the council and its national meanings arise from the meanings and principles on which Jordan is based."



HM King Hussein

King Hussein voiced hope that "this step will mark the beginning of a new and serious era of constructive work whose fruits will benefit the future generations and will serve as a firm step on the path of strengthening the pan-Arab structure and achieving the hopes and aspirations of the whole Arab Nation."

Dali leaves on upbeat note on cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — South Yemen Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dali left Amman Tuesday after concluding talks here on his country's desire to launch cooperation with Jordan in various fields. In a departure statement, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dali said his talks with Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and other officials paved the way for agreement on a host of matters of interest to the two countries. Dali expressed happiness over the outcome of the visit and said he was optimistic about future cooperation with Jordan.

Yemen, Iraq, Egypt and Jordan. Dali described the new group as a very practical step towards mobilising Arab potential. During his four-day visit to Jordan, Dali was received in audience by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to whom he delivered a message to His Majesty King Hussein from the South Yemeni president. He held talks with Rifai and Jordanian ministers on cooperation in various fields. Dali also toured a number of institutions, including the pharmaceutical plants in Salt. In Damascus, Dali had talks with his Syrian counterpart Farouq Al Sharaa later Tuesday on developments in the Arab World. Diplomats quoted by Reuters said Dali was expected to discuss the ACC.

23 children injured in Israeli air raid

'AINAB, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli jets wounded 23 children and two teachers in raids on a Druze mountain village and a Palestinian camp in Lebanon Tuesday, witnesses and hospital sources quoted by Reuter said.

Two adults were also reported killed and another man wounded in the raids on the village of 'Ainab and the Palestinian camp in a nearby valley 20 kilometres southeast of Beirut. An Israeli army spokesman claimed the planes destroyed a headquarters of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) used for attacks against Israel. Witnesses at 'Ainab told Reuters the children, aged between five and 12 years, were wounded mainly by shrapnel and flying glass when the jets dropped three bombs near their elementary school. Sources at several hospitals in the area said 10 children were in serious condition. Only three had been released from hospital after treatment.

One bomb blasted a crater 10 metres wide and three metres deep near the school, where pools of blood lay on classroom floors. Desks were overturned and books scattered by the explosion. Bombs slammed into the village of 2,000 people. Shop shutters were blasted off their hinges and windows broken. Smoke rose from burning cars in the streets. Sources in Beirut told Reuters the Israeli jets also hit an office of the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) in the nearby village of Baisour. A DFLP official said two of its members were killed in the attack. The air strike coincided with the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the DFLP which lost three fighters in a confrontation with Israeli-affiliated militiamen in South Lebanon last Thursday. Police said six fighter-bombers took part in the raid. Flying in across the Mediterranean sky, they staged at least three bombing and rocketing runs within 30 minutes on the targets, according to the police.

Palestinian as well as Lebanese militia gunners fired anti-aircraft guns at the raiding planes from positions in the mountains and around Beirut international airport, but no hits were reported, a police spokesman said. Air traffic was brought to a standstill at Lebanon's only civil aviation facility during the raid. Israel's third on Lebanon this year, the spokesman said. At least 128 people were killed and 356 wounded in 25 Israeli air raids on Lebanon last year. A DFLP statement issued in Beirut said: "Israel's raids on civilians and Lebanese citizens as well as Palestinian bases, reaffirms that Zionist terrorism, backed by its ally the United States, has not stopped."

PLO disavows responsibility for actions by splinter groups

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), in remarks published Tuesday, said it could not be expected to control the actions of its splinter groups and also criticised as weak the European response to its peace overtures. "The PLO is not prepared to condemn operations which any Palestinian organisation or faction undertakes," PLO foreign affairs spokesman Farouq Kaddoumi was quoted as saying by the Asharq Al Awsat newspaper. Kaddoumi was apparently referring to a reported attempt last week to infiltrate Israel by members of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The United States said the PLO should be held responsible for the action.

"It is not easy for a leadership, a revolutionary movement or a country to control its people completely, except if it has prisons, laws and regulations which limit some human activities which hurt human freedom and the society," Kaddoumi told the newspaper during a stopover in Riyadh on his way to Ethiopia. The United States said Monday the PLO could not escape responsibility for acts by its constituent elements and announced plans for a meeting with the PLO to discuss the raid. Kaddoumi added: "Individuals or groups might undertake these kinds of (guerrilla) operations, but the PLO does not."

In a separate interview in Iraq with the Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra, Salah Khalaf, deputy to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, said the European Community had failed to react positively enough to the recent Palestinian peace overtures.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday presents an award to Dr. Abdul-lah Khafif, chairman of the General Union of Voluntary Societies, in recognition of his leading

role in voluntary work in Jordan. The award, one among several presented Tuesday, were conferred, on pioneers of voluntary work by His Majesty King Hussein (Petra photo)

Jordan honours pioneers of voluntary work in Kingdom

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday honoured pioneers of voluntary work in Jordan and presented them with medals conferred by His Majesty King Hussein.

Those receiving the honour were: Abdul Salam Abbadi, Anwar Bilbeisi, Abdullah Al Khatib, Khawla Abu Odeh, Ahmad Abu Ghunaim, Fahmi Kreishan, Kamel Milkawi, Hind Adib Al Sabbagh and Yahya Al Shamali. The Regent, in a brief speech at the presentation ceremony

held at the Royal Court, paid tribute to the pioneers' work, which "enriches the social march and serves as a back-up for social services provided by official organisations and the government." Jordan, the Regent noted, gives due attention to social and voluntary work which can contribute to the social and economic development. He urged those involved in social and voluntary work in the country to help the society develop and foster the spirit of productivity in the community and help eliminate negative patterns which tend to bring harm to the country and citizens. The country, the Crown Prince added, is in need of a national voluntary service which, apart from supervising voluntary and social services, can also encourage the tendency of productivity and eliminate excessive consumption and other negative aspects. Prince Hassan heard a briefing on voluntary and social services carried out in the Kingdom and paid tribute to voluntary organisations. The meeting was attended by Minister of Social Development Fawwaz Touqan and officials.

Socialist mission arrives, supports peace conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — A six-member team from Socialist International arrived in Amman Tuesday and announced the group's support for the call for an international conference to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and establish peace in the Middle East. The proposed conference should be attended by all concerned parties including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, said the team's leader, Hans-Jergen Wischniewski from West Germany, upon his arrival with the delegation at the start of a Middle East tour. The fact-finding tour organised by Socialist International will take the group to Syria, Israel, the occupied West Bank and Gaza for discussions on the Middle East situation. Wischniewski said in the state-

ment carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the tour would provide the group with views on the peace process and ways in which Socialist International could contribute towards convening an international peace conference. He said the visit to Jordan assumes a special importance in view of the Kingdom's significant position and its key role in any peace process. The group met in Tunis with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. Wischniewski said. He described the meeting as positive and important. He said the team would meet with people living in the occupied territories and submit a report on their findings to a Socialist International meeting in Vienna next week. The Vienna meeting will name a date for an enlarged meeting for

Socialist International to be held in Brussels in June which will be attended by representatives of parties to the Middle East conflict including the PLO, and the U.N. Security Council member states to discuss the question of an international conference, Wischniewski said. He said an increasing number of Israelis now support the conference and a dialogue with the PLO. The ongoing U.S.-PLO dialogue and the prevailing East-West détente are favourable elements that encourage the convening of such a forum, he added. The team groups representatives of Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, France and Egypt in addition to West Germany. Jordanian officials will discuss with the team the Middle East question. The team leaves for Damascus Thursday.

Palestinians boycott Jerusalem elections

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians in Jerusalem boycotted Israeli municipal elections and staged a general strike Tuesday and a Palestinian was shot and killed in an occupied West Bank village. An anonymous caller belonging to a group claiming to hold captive a missing Israeli paratrooper threatened Tuesday to kill the soldier unless Israel releases 1,500 Palestinian prisoners. In the occupied West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem, a general strike called by underground leaders halted all transportation and closed businesses. The strike was called in boycott of Tuesday's municipal elections by Arab Jerusalem's 70,000 Arab voters. Because of the elections in 147 cities and counties, the Israeli army ordered the occupied territories sealed from midnight Monday to 10 p.m. Tuesday. Protests erupted in Gaza City, the nearby Shati and Jabalya refugee camps and the West Bank town of Tulkarem. Troops shot and wounded four Palestinians in the clashes, including a 15-year-old boy who was hit in the chest, thigh and hand, doctors said. Also Tuesday, the army announced troops killed a 25-year-old Palestinian during a clash overnight in the West Bank village of Deir Abziye. Ramallah hospital officials said Atwa Lafti Darwanar was dead on arrival with a bullet wound to the head. A curfew remained in effect for the fifth day Tuesday in the West Bank town of Nabulus and troops conducted house-to-house searches for suspects in the killing of an Israeli soldier in the city's open-air market Friday.

Israel Radio said only nine Arab voters cast ballots during the morning hours in Arab Jerusalem, while about 30 per cent of some 2.7 million Israeli voters had gone to polling stations. In the latest development on the missing Israeli paratrooper, the anonymous caller told Israel Radio his group would release a cassette to prove they were holding the soldier, Avi Sasportas, who disappeared 13 days ago, according to radio reporter Eilun Ben-On. "He said 'we are the organisation that is holding the soldier and we want you to release 1,500 prisoners. If not, the soldier will die,'" Ben-On told the AP. He said the caller, who spoke Hebrew with an Arab accent, read from a prepared statement and refused to answer questions. He hung up after about 15 seconds and did not

name the group he claimed to represent. On Monday, a similar call to the Agency France Presse news agency said a group called the Palestinian Arab Army was holding the soldier. The caller said the group was not linked to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The Palestinian Arab Army was not publicly known before Monday's call. The Israeli commander in the West Bank, Amram Mitzna told the Haaretz daily it has been operating since the start of the Palestinian uprising, but later said on radio nothing was known of the group. On Israel Radio, Mitzna said the army was treating Tuesday's call seriously but did not plan to comply with the demand to release prisoners. The caller did not say which prisoners he was demanding freedom for, but army figures

indicate as many as 9,000 Palestinians have been jailed in connection with the uprising. Sasportas' disappearance Feb. 16 has prompted concern throughout Israel, with thousands participating in searches and the media engaging in extensive coverage. Proof that he was kidnapped by a Palestinian group is likely to undermine current tentative shifts in public opinion towards negotiations with the PLO. Sasportas was last seen near Ashkelon, after leaving his base in southern Israel to hitch a ride home to Ashdod. He was wearing his uniform and armed with an M-16 assault rifle. The area is close to the Gaza Strip. Army officials said Monday that a similar claim of responsibility was received five days earlier from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. It was withheld by authorities at the time.

Iran serves Rushdie ultimatum on Britain

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran threatened Tuesday to break relations with London unless the British government denounced author Salman Rushdie, threatened with death for blasphemy against Islam. At least 25 protesters were injured in a second day of anti-Rushdie violence in India, where Rushdie was born into a Muslim family. In Islam's holiest city, Mecca, Islamic scholars rejected an apology from the 41-year-old author for offending Muslims with his award-winning book "The Satanic Verses." Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who first ordered the writer's death two weeks ago, has already dismissed the apology. The Iranian parliament voted overwhelmingly to cut ties with Britain for condemning Iran over the death order unless the government declared within a week "its opposition to the unprincipled stands against the world of Islam, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the contents of the anti-Islamic book 'The Satanic Verses.'" The decision to give a one-

week ultimatum, praised by Speaker Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was a compromise between hardliners demanding an immediate break and moderates saying an apology from Britain would suffice. London has already recalled its five diplomats from Tehran and ordered home Iran's two envoys. A government minister said Tehran's ultimatum was "one more step down a very unfortunate path," for the people of Iran. The Foreign Office reiterated Britain's views that Iran must repudiate violence and respect other countries' laws if it wants normal relations. "It is for Iran to decide whether she wants normal relations," said a Foreign Office spokesman. "If she does, she must renounce the use or threat of violence against citizens of other countries."

Soviet offer The Soviet Union might be willing to mediate to help resolve the furor over the book, a Soviet spokesman said Tuesday. In the first official comment from Moscow, Gennady Gerasimov said Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had discussed the row over Rushdie's novel during talks in Tehran with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and Rafsanjani Monday. "The situation around 'The Satanic Verses' causes grave concern for the Soviet leadership," Gerasimov told a news briefing, adding that the row could lead to "unforeseeable consequences." "The Soviet side gained the impression that the Iranian government wants a solution and believes the Soviet Union could have a positive role in achieving this," Gerasimov said. Gerasimov would not elaborate on "this very delicate and sensitive question," but said the matter would be raised at Soviet talks in Moscow this week with visiting Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez and in Vienna next week with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The Islamic Fiqh (Jurisprudence) Academy in Mecca, an international body of Muslim scholars, said its members had read parts of Rushdie's book and found it contained ugly and filthy lies.

An academy statement, carried by the Saudi Press Agency, said: "The academy saw in it the most ugly and filthy picture of the ugly lies and descriptions used by the book to portray Mohammad, the Prophet of Islam... and his wives, the mothers of the faithful." It said the Jeddah-based Organisation of Islamic Conference would pursue the issue through the courts. The Saudi agency made no mention of Khomeini's death order. In Britain, where the author is hiding under police guard, a leader of the Muslim community said the death call was a crime against God.

Zaki Badawi, chairman of the Imams and Mosques Council, said he would take Rushdie into his own home for protection even though he viewed his book as an insult to Islam. In a newspaper interview, he said Rushdie was apparently an apostate, a heretic, but neither Khomeini nor any other Muslim authority could sentence him to death. The Press Trust of India news agency said demonstrators in India fought with police in the northern city of Srinagar. In Bombay, Rushdie's birth-

Expatriates conference to be held in July

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The fifth Jordanian expatriates conference will be held in Amman during July 1989, according to a recent statement here. The statement said the government has entrusted the conference's special committees to embark on preparations for the coming meetings. Last July's conference was attended by some 800 delegates representing Jordanian expatriates in Arab, Asian and American countries.

Anani, ACC envoys underline importance of new alliance

AMMAN (Petra) — The importance of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) grouping Jordan, Iraq, North Yemen and Egypt and the political dimensions of the newly-established economic alliance were the focus of a meeting organised by the Arab Youth Forum (AYF) here Tuesday. Royal Scientific Society (RSS) President Jawad Al Anani, one of the speakers, summed up the main future challenges facing the founding members of the council, which was proclaimed at a Feb. 16 summit held in Baghdad of the leaders of the four countries. Anani said the ACC members faced a number of challenges in the field of technology, food, industry, culture, water, energy and armed forces and said the administration of the next phase of the concerned countries requires drawing from past international experiences of the four. He called for an active general secretariat for the council and for introducing the concept of "the Arab employee who is really dedicated to serving common Arab interests and to building a strong and solid base of economic relations capable of remaining steadfast in the face of challenges."

North Yemeni Ambassador to Jordan Abdullah Abu Lahoum outlined the major objectives of the ACC and emphasised that the council was not a political bloc or a divisive entity within the Arab Nation. Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan Ghafel Jassem Hussein said the creation of the ACC was a manifestation of a long and dedicated

motivated by his farsightedness and pan-Arab position, has made tireless efforts to achieve what we all aspire for," the ambassador said. AYF Secretary-General Abdullah Hijazi also addressed the gathering on the significance of the ACC and said the creation of the council represents a new era in Arab history. Kuwaiti tribute In a related development, the Kuwaiti ambassador to Japan was quoted by Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) as welcoming the creation of the ACC. Ambassador Abdul Aziz Al Sharekh also paid tribute to efforts made by King Hussein and President Mubarak to establish a just, durable and comprehensive solution to the Middle East question. In an interview with the MENA correspondent in Tokyo, Sharekh praised the contacts King Hussein and President Mubarak made and their meetings with world leaders during their presence in Tokyo to take part in the funeral of Emperor Hirohito. He said the meetings of the two Arab leaders in Tokyo would soon come up with positive and tangible results. The ambassador voiced appreciation for the creation of the ACC said there was no contradiction between the formation of the ACC and the Gulf Cooperation Council "because both serve Arab interests and enhance Arab strength."

Dr. Jawad Anani march towards building strong inter-Arab relations on common understanding of the nature of the present era and the requirements and challenges of the age. Egyptian Ambassador to Jordan Ihab Muqbil conveyed congratulations and greetings from President Hosni Mubarak and best wishes of the Egyptian leader to the Jordanian people and the AYF over the creation of the ACC. "We are in dire need for serious action, enhanced thoughts and vision as well as dedication," Muqbil told the gathering. "These characteristics are enjoyed by the four leaders of the ACC member states, he said. "His Majesty King Hussein,

Sudan unions urge peace with rebels

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan's trade unions and political parties have urged embattled Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi to dissolve his coalition government and accept peace with southern rebels.

The Sudan News Agency (SUNA) reported Tuesday that the 37 parties and unions had also called for the formation of a broad-based government to include all political parties and trade unions.

Similar proposals for a new government were rejected earlier this week by the militant National Islamic Front (NIF), main party with Mahdi's Umma Party in the coalition.

The agency said the 37 groups signed their statement Monday at the headquarters of the Democratic Unionist Party, which late last year negotiated a peace pact with rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The DUP quit Mahdi's government in protest when parliament rejected the pact.

The new demands were issued with the expiry of an ultimatum given Mahdi by his generals to introduce reform and ensure more support for the 60,000-

strong army, which has suffered a string of defeats at the hands of SPLA.

The generals have given no public response to Mahdi's announcement in parliament Monday that he would resign Sunday unless he was given a free hand to form a new, broad-based government.

Mahdi, in office for nearly three years, also demanded assurances from the military that it would continue to respect the constitution and asked trade unions to stop strikes while the six-year-long war continued.

Defence sources said Tuesday senior army officers were meeting in the military headquarters in central Khartoum.

The army has yet to make a statement on a claim by the SPLA Monday that its guerrillas had captured the town of Torit.

The SPLA has been fighting in the south since 1983 to end what it seems as the rule of a minority clique in Khartoum.

Torit, near the Ugandan and Kenyan border, has been under rebel siege for several months, and reports from the area have consistently spoken of scores of its inhabitants starving to death every day.

It was the second large garrison town to fall into SPLA hands this year. Last month, the SPLA captured Nasir in upper Nile region near the Ethiopian border.

The SPLA said that Juba, south Sudan's largest town 135 kilometres northwest of Torit, was its next target.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in his sharpest public criticism of the Sudanese leader, told reporters in Cairo that Mahdi was trying to divert attention from his own problems and that he had squandered a chance for a peaceful settlement in the south.

Mubarak cited last November's peace pact between the SPLA and the DUP which Mahdi rejected with the help of his militant NIF allies in the coalition.

The DUP, which has a big pro-Egyptian faction, quit the government in December in protest.



Sadeq Al Mahdi

Arab diplomats said Mubarak's attack would increase pressure on the Sudanese leader to seek an end to the war.

Kuwait expects better approach from Bush

KUWAIT (AP) — Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah said Monday he believes U.S. President George Bush will pursue policies that will show a better understanding of Arab views than Ronald Reagan.

"I share this opinion," said Sheikh Saad, who is also Kuwait's crown prince, when asked to comment on whether Bush's policies would take Arab opinions more into consideration than Reagan.

Sheikh Saad said he met Bush, then vice-president, during a visit to Washington last July, and "freely exchanged opinions on a variety of issues," including the Middle East problem and the Iran-Iraq war which was then raging.

"I found the man in possession of sufficient experience on all issues we discussed as well as the desire to find solutions to these problems," the premier told Egyptian newspaper editors in an interview broadcast by Kuwait television.

The editors were accompanying Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who made a two-day visit to Kuwait en route home from Tokyo, where he attended the funeral of Japanese Emperor

Hirohito and had talks with Bush. Mubarak left for Cairo earlier Monday.

Responding to another question, Sheikh Saad said that "tension has eased in the Gulf" because of the six-month-old ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq conflict.

He expressed hope that the two countries would resolve their problems in peace talks due to resume at the United Nations next month.

He said "it was up to the concerned big powers," to reduce their naval presence in the Gulf, assembled at the height of the war to protect shipping.

"These naval forces had been present for several years in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean," he added.

On oil prices, Sheikh Saad said that the "present and future" of the 13-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) depended on members sticking to production quotas aimed at boosting oil prices.

Sheikh Saad welcomed the recent founding of the Arab Cooperation Council, an economic alliance of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and North Yemen, as "conducive



Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah

to more Arab strength and solidarity.

Sheikh Saad, whose country is the current chairman of the 46-member Organisation of Islamic Conference, warned Afghanistan's Mujahideen rebels fighters that divisions following the Soviet military withdrawal "might lead to a power struggle that allows foreigners the opportunity to intervene again in Afghanistan's internal affairs."

Therefore, he added, "we appeal to our brethren in Afghanistan to resort to wisdom and dialogue to resolve their differences instead of resorting to arms."

U.S. experts, after talks, say PLO serious about peace

By Carol Giacomo
Reuters

WASHINGTON — American experts who recently spent 20 hours probing the positions of Yasser Arafat and other Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said Monday they believe these Palestinian leaders are serious about pursuing direct peace negotiations with Israel.

"I think these people are serious," said Hal Saunders who with other U.S. experts met Arafat, his deputy Saleh Khalaf and other PLO leaders in Tunis Feb. 13-17.

"They recognise this is a process (negotiations) that will take some time but they'd like to get on with it," Saunders added.

He and other experts described the PLO command as confident, purposeful, reasonably unified and determined to continue the 14-month-old uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip that it considers a political "trump card" in its conflict with Israel.

The PLO would not order an end to the uprising at least until negotiations with Israel begin but indicated it might take "different shapes," depending on political conditions, said William Quandt of the Brookings Institution, who led the privately-funded trip.

As part of the Carter administration in the late 1970s, both Quandt and Saunders, who also is with Brookings, participated in

the Camp David accords that brought peace between Israel and Egypt.

The trip comes at a time of potentially significant change in the region, including the Palestinian uprising, a U.S. dialogue with the PLO after a 13-year hiatus and improved relations between Washington and Moscow, which recently has expressed interest in cooperating on peace efforts.

Saunders predicted that over the next three or four months the PLO would move towards more "authoritative" talks with Israel and then the two sides could begin discussing the "overall shape of a (peace) settlement," although maybe not this year.

"One never knows until one formulates proposals that people can agree or not agree to (but) it seems to me there's a lot more to work with on the Palestinian side of the equation than we've had to work with in a long time," he told a seminar on their trip.

Quandt saw PLO leaders as "quite serious and businesslike" and said: "If ever there was a time when Arafat felt he was in charge, had an organisation behind him and did not have to worry about his own dissidents, we're at the time."

One of the most encouraging developments was a PLO acknowledgement that "whoever the Israeli leaders are, we have to try to deal with them," he said.

Helena Cobban found a "new sense of confidence, purpose and strategy" within the PLO borne of the uprising against Israeli occupation that has focused Palestinian nationalist attention.

"There is a sense that if they can just keep the intifada going as it is now, over time changes in Israeli society and other factors such as American and European pressure on Israel will shift the Israeli government into direct negotiations" with the PLO, said Cobban, a Brookings guest scholar.

Saunders said PLO leaders, who last year declared an independent state, admitted that for years they had "hoped to establish one, democratic secular state in Palestine."

But he said they told the Americans: "We have learned from 40 years of suffering that such a resolution is not realistic" and had come to terms with a two-state solution.

The PLO envisions a "confederal" relationship with Jordan and economic and political ties with Israel like those of Europe's Benelux countries, Saunders said.

The relationship will be based on mutual security and "terrorism" against Israel from the Palestinian state will not be allowed, he said.

The experts said the PLO showed "great flexibility" about the format for negotiations with Israel and promised that when talks start "all issues will be on the table," including the PLO charter.

Iraq to hold first presidential election

BAGHDAD (R) — The government said Monday that Iraq would hold its first presidential election, but gave no date for the poll, the state-run television reported Monday.

It said the decision to hold a presidential election was originally made in 1989, but the war with Iran which broke out in September that year forced the government to postpone the poll.

Under Iraq's current constitution, the president and vice-president are elected by the ruling nine-member Revolutionary Command Council.

The network said discussions were under way to include a provision for regular presidential elections in a new constitution currently being drafted by a special government committee.

It is headed by the vice chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, Izzat Ibrahim.

The government said Sunday a referendum would be held to

approve the proposed new constitution and a new parliamentary election law, allowing new parties to form.

General elections for the 255-member National Assembly, or parliament, are scheduled for April 1 after being delayed from last August.

The television gave no details about who took the decision to hold the presidential election or when it was made to implement the 1980 decision.

But it said President Saddam Hussein's office had notified a TV law programme on the issue in response to a letter from a citizen who asked "Why the presidency is a monopoly of the Baath Party?"

There has never been a presidential election in Iraq since the army took power in 1958.

After a series of coups, the Baath Socialist Party ousted the military in a bloodless 1968 putsch with army Brigadier



Saddam Hussein

Ahmad Hassan Al Bakr, a former prime minister, named president. Hussein, his vice president after 1969, became president July 16, 1979, after a peaceful transfer of power.

The political developments came amid tentative moves by Hussein to liberalise Iraq, which has a population of 16 million, following the Aug. 20 ceasefire in the eight-year Gulf war with Iran.

Lebanese identified as RJ hijack leader in U.S. court

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The first witness in the sky piracy trial of Fawaz Younis Monday identified the Lebanese defendant as the man who led five hijackers aboard a Royal Jordanian (RJ) airliner in Beirut June 11, 1985.

Landry T. Slade, a vice president of the American University of Beirut, testified that Younis, called "Nazeeh" by the other hijackers, spent most of 30-hour hijacking in the cockpit of the Boeing 727 and was treated as the leader.

The other four hijackers remained in the passenger compartment, he said.

Slade, then a professor at the AUB, and his son were passengers on the Boeing 727. The passengers and crew were taken off the plane before it was blown up at Beirut airport.

Younis was arrested by U.S. government agents in 1987 on a boat in the Mediterranean and flown to Washington to stand trial. He is the first person prosecuted under a 1984 federal law that gives the United States the right to make arrests anywhere in the world of people accused of acts of terrorism against Americans.

"He is the man who bore the name Nazeeh," Slade told the jury during the first day of testimony at the U.S. district court in Washington.

Slade identified Younis as the man sitting at the defendant's table wearing a grey sweater and a tie.

Slade, who now works for American University in New York, said the hijackers found out he and his son were Americans early in the flight and told them not to worry.

Federal Prosecutor J. Ramsey Johnson told the jury the government would have testimony from several passengers and crew of the jet who would identify Younis, as well as videotape of Younis making a statement just before the jet was blown up.

"After you hear all of the evidence we will ask that you return a verdict of guilty," Johnson said in his opening statement.

Younis could get life in prison if convicted.

His lawyer, Francis Carter, said FBI agents broke both of Younis's wrists when he was arrested and did not provide him with medical treatment for at least two days.

He said Younis was sea while he was being questioned for four days on a navy ship that took him to the aircraft carrier Saratoga for a 13-hour flight to

Washington. Younis signed a confession during the sea trip.

Carter said of the hijacking, "sure, this was no picnic," but he reminded the jury that no passengers were injured and that the Americans on board were well treated.

"You will have to determine whether the statement that my client gave to the FBI was voluntary or involuntary," Carter said. A federal appeals court had ruled that the confession may be used as evidence.

The five hijackers boarded the airliner at Beirut airport and demanded that it be flown to Tunis, where they wanted to read a statement in support of Palestinian rights. Johnson said in his opening statement.

Tunisian authorities denied the plane permission to land, and it returned eventually to Beirut, where the passengers were released and the aircraft was destroyed.

Just before the passengers were released, Younis squatted in the aisle next to Slade and his son, William, then 18.

"We knew all along who you were," Slade said Younis told him. And he asked Americans to tell reporters "that the passengers were not mistreated."

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Iran serves Rushdie ultimatum to Britain

Continued from page 1

place, a Muslim wounded in protests there last Friday died, taking the official death toll from the police shooting to 11.

At least 20 people have died since the row over Rushdie's novel erupted.

Pakistan banned one issue of the Karachi-based *Takbeer* weekly for carrying extracts of "The Satanic Verses."

The Chairman of Pakistan's Senate said Rushdie had hurt Muslim feelings but nobody should be sentenced to death without a trial.

Vasim Sajjad told a news conference that as a Muslim country Pakistan had been hurt by "the open incentive and abuse" in "The Satanic Verses."

He refused direct comment on Iran's diplomatic war with Britain and other Western nations but,

asked whether he believed Khomeini had the authority under Muslim faith to call for Rushdie's death, Sajjad said: "As Pakistanis we believe that Islam also gives you a right to a trial."

Sajjad, a former minister of justice and parliamentary affairs, added: "Our constitution says specifically that a person has to be tried before he can be punished."

DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Koran
15:45	Programme review
16:45	Children's programmes
17:15	Programme on plants
18:00	Out of World
18:05	News summary in Arabic
18:05	Cairo News Message
18:15	Arabic series
19:00	Local programme
19:30	Common mistakes
19:40	Programme review
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Arabic series
21:30	Programme review
21:40	Wrestling
22:30	Arabic series
23:00	News summary in Arabic
23:10	Programme (cont.)
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Champs Elysees
18:00	News in French
19:15	Aujourd'hui en Jordanie
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Doc. "Springs in Jordan"
20:55	Life with Lucy
21:30	The Crowded Desert
22:00	News in English
22:30	Elvis and Me
PRAYER TIMES	
06:43	Fajr
08:00	(Sunrise) Dhuha

CHURCHES	
11:48	Dhuhr
15:03	Asr
17:35	Maghreb
18:59	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church	Swedish Tel. 810782
Assemblies of God Church	Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church	Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation	Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church	Tel. 61757
Terraviva Church	Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation	Tel. 625541
Anglican Church	Tel. 625383
Church of the Holy Spirit	Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church	Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church	Tel. 775361
St. Egidius Church	Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church	Tel. 685326
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will remain warm and gradual	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Rami Al Mizzawi	694788
Dr. Salah A. Fouad	674028
Dr. Othman Mustafa	774024
Dr. Zein Zaghul	635951
Firza pharmacy	61912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nahrain pharmacy	623672
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisni pharmacy	637660
EMERGENCIES	
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	109
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	6230093
Blind Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	65639091
Public Security Department	
Hotels	659000 / 685111
Hotel Complaints	658800
Price Complaints	681176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	809969
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	659000 / 685111
Director (assistance)	12
Overseas Calls	17
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101

HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/22
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn.	642416
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn.	642417
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mallat, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisni	664171/4
Shmeisni Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843845
Al-Musayyid Hospital	672279
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajir	777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	60224050
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275

FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)33300-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
09:10	Agaba (RJ)
09:10	Damascus (RJ)
09:30	Cairo (RJ)
09:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00	Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
10:15	Larnaca (RJ)
10:20	Los Angeles, Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
11:00	Riyadh (RJ)
11:05	Paris (RJ)
11:30	New York, Texas (RJ)
11:45	London, Geneva (RJ)
12:05	Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:30	Madrid, Rome (RJ)
13:45	Belgrade, Bucharest (RJ)
06:30	Baghdad (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
09:25	Cairo (MS)
11:20	Damascus (AZ)
12:15	Sana'a, Jeddah (FY)
12:15	Baghdad (IA)
13:40	Kuwait (KL)
13:45	Kuwait (LN)

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Mitterrand to visit Algeria next month

PARIS (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand will visit Algeria March 9 and 10, a spokeswoman said Monday. The visit was scheduled for last year but was delayed after anti-government riots in Algeria in which at least 161 people died. Algeria won independence from France in 1962 after an eight-year long war. Some 700,000 Algerian citizens live in France. France Monday signed a seven-billion-franc (\$1.2-billion) credit deal for Algeria in a move diplomats said was linked to ending a two-year dispute between Paris and Algiers over French purchases of Algerian natural gas.

Fahd tells civil servants to shape up

NICOSIA (R) — King Fahd prodded Saudi civil servants Monday to improve efficiency and said office monitors would keep an eye on their performance. "I am sure of the continuous effort that everyone exerts... to achieve the best levels of administration in the public interest," the Saudi Press Agency quoted King Fahd as saying. "But I look for more precision... to bypass the obstacles of routine," he said. The king said civil servants should finish their work more quickly and people would be appointed in all sections to speed up work flow. These monitors would present

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

ROYAL DECREE: A Royal Decree has been issued, endorsing the revised law on residence and foreigner affairs, whereby the residence-fee for foreigners will be JD 15 per annum. The revised law imposed a monthly fine of JD 30 for each month of residence beyond the residence permit's duration. (Petra)

HOLIDAY ON MARCH 5: All government departments and public institutions will observe a holiday Sunday March 5, 1989 to mark Al Israa Wal Mi'raj feast, according to an official communique Tuesday. The event is normally marked by religious ceremonies in all the country's mosques organised by the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs. (Petra, J.T.)

PRINCE RA'AD IN IRBID: Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ibn Zaid, who is also the honorary president of the Friendship Society for the Blind, discussed with officials in Irbid Governorate the necessary steps for establishing a permanent centre and educational institution for the blind in Irbid Governorate. (Petra)

SOVIET ORTHOPAEDIST TO ARRIVE: The famous Soviet orthopaedist Ali Zarouf and his aide will arrive in Amman on March 21 on a several day official visit to Jordan in response to an invitation by the Ministry of Health. (Petra)

CHINESE MINISTER ARRIVES: Chinese Deputy Minister of Mining arrived in Amman Tuesday at the head of a Chinese delegation on a five-day visit to Jordan for talks with Jordanian officials on projects carried out by Chinese companies. The Chinese official will also visit Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid, which is financed through a loan from the Peoples Republic of China and carried out by a Chinese company. (Petra)

HMOUD MEETS WITH 3 ENVOYS: Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Marwan Al Hmoud Tuesday received in three separate meetings ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates, China and Italy and discussed with them scopes of cooperation in the fields of development and conservation of nature. (Petra)

NUMBERING AND NAMING STREETS: Greater Amman Municipality, in cooperation with the Organisation of Islamic Capitals and Cities will hold a seminar on the new methods for numbering and naming streets and areas, at the Royal Cultural Centre during the period from March 18 to 23. Taking part in the seminar will be 60 participants from Islamic capitals. (Petra)

HEARING AND SPEECH TEAM: A specialised hearing and speech team from Queen Alia Foundation for Hearing and Speech will visit Mu'tah Special Education Centre, where they will conduct hearing tests and will provide hearing aids to children suffering from hearing problems. (Petra)

ARAB CITIES DAY: Under the theme of "towards integrated municipal and social services," Greater Amman Municipality will celebrate the Arab Cities Day on March 15, along with other Arab capitals and cities. On the occasion, the municipality will carry out a number of cultural and social activities and will hoist the Jordanian flag, along with the Amman Municipality flag and that of the Arab Cities Organisation in the main streets and yards of Amman. (Petra)

ANALYSIS OF MARKET INFORMATION: A two-day international symposium on analysis of market information for housing purposes started in Amman Tuesday. The symposium, organised by the Housing Bank in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a number of housing and finance institutions from Algeria and Tunisia, aims to train participants on analysis of market information to enable housing institutions and financiers to explore the feasibility of such housing projects. (Petra)

SYRIAN EDUCATION MINISTER TO ARRIVE: Syrian Minister of Higher Education Kamal Sharaf is due in Amman on March 11 at the head of a delegation to discuss cooperation in education. The minister and his delegation will be making the four-day visit at the invitation of Jordan's Minister of Higher Education Nassereddin Al Assad, according to an official announcement here Tuesday. The announcement said that higher education and cooperation between Jordanian and Syrian universities will be among the main topics to be discussed. Dr. Sharaf will be accompanied by the presidents of the Syrian universities of Aleppo, Damascus and Tishrin. (Petra)

MAJALI RECEIVES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: Public Security Director General Abdul Hadi Al Majali Tuesday briefed students from the University of Jordan on the establishment and development of the Public Security system in Jordan, and made special reference to the new philosophy adopted by the PSD. (Petra)

Canadian trade team ends visit to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Canadian technology, trade and investment delegation wound up a five-day visit to Jordan Tuesday by expressing hope that scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Canada will be extended and increased in all fields. Samir Zalzal, who headed a team of Canadians representing the Ottawa-based Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC), said that he will embark on measures leading to the implementation of joint projects and industrial investments in the Kingdom as soon as he and his delegation have carried out the necessary arrangements with Canadian businessmen and industrialists. The delegation which also included a number of Canadian Foreign Ministry officials had met with Jordanian government officials and businessmen and discussed bilateral cooperation in industrial and economic fields. CABC consists of over 50 prominent Canadian private sector firms and it is the largest trade association in Canada, directing efforts at the expansion of corporate interest in the Arab World. Zalzal told a press conference here last Sunday that his delegation predicted a prominent role for Jordan in Canadian-Arab trade relations.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- * The Arab Contemporary Artists exhibition at Al Wasiti Gallery.
- * An exhibition of paintings by French artist Francoise Petrovitch at the French Cultural Centre.
- * The Polish contemporary art exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- * An exhibition entitled "The Icebreaker" which includes showing a film about the activities of a Swedish icebreaker and the environment surrounding it, a photo exhibition and a radio programme at the French Cultural Centre.
- * An exhibition on geology and development plans in Jordan which includes samples of rocks, minerals, fossils and raw material manufactured in Jordan, at the Yarmouk University.
- * An art exhibition by Mohammad Bolls and Munira Al Tunisiyya at Al Qadisiyya College.
- * The Iraqi children's exhibition which includes 100 paintings by Iraqi children and an exhibition of children's books at Zarqa Comprehensive School for Boys.
- * The Yemeni national heritage exhibition which includes Yemeni costumes, handicrafts, photos and books at the Yarmouk University.
- * An exhibition of photographs and paintings showing the main European cities in three historical eras, at the University of Jordan.
- * A photographic exhibition entitled "Under Pure Skies" exhibiting 100 15th century photographs of the Middle East at Zarqa Community College.



Minister of Industry and Trade Hamdi Tabbaa Tuesday holds talks with a visiting Taiwanese trade delegation in Amman (Petra photo)

Taiwanese express readiness to establish strong trade ties

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — A Taiwanese trade investment delegation Tuesday expressed readiness to contribute to the implementation of a number of projects in the Kingdom in cooperation with the private and public sectors.

The head of the visiting delegation, who was speaking at a meeting with Minister of Industry and Trade Hamdi Tabbaa, referred to the presence of a number of Taiwanese firms carrying out a number of plans in the country.

Taiwan, he said, "looks forward to establishing very strong economic and trade ties with Jordan in view of the Kingdom's investment possibilities, its economic policies and its central location within the Arab World."

The delegation leader said that his country was also willing to provide training to Jordanian personnel in the fields of industrial engineering, investment and technology.

For his part, Tabbaa welcomed the delegation's ideas and said Taiwan would be most welcome

to open an industrial fair in Amman with the purpose of promoting the sale of Taiwanese national products.

The minister discussed with the Taiwanese visitors, who represent a large number of major firms in Taiwan, prospects for economic and trade cooperation, increasing the volume of goods imported by Jordan and Taiwan from each other and increasing the Taiwanese firms' activities here especially in the textile industries.

It was decided at the meeting that a Jordanian economic delegation should pay a visit to Taiwan shortly to follow up talks on these matters and examine the prospects of opening new markets for Jordanian and Taiwanese national products in either country.

The two sides discussed the prospect of concluding a trade agreement, and the activities of the Taiwan Trade Office in Amman and Jordan's Trade Office in Taipei.

Tabbaa briefed the visitors on

Jordan's investment policies and incentives to foreign businessmen and industrialists.

Apart from businessmen, the delegation groups a number of officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Jordan's 1987 imports from Taiwan amounted to JD 16 million and these included clothes, electric appliances, natural and artificial rubber, tyres, textile products and office equipment. It said that Jordan's exports to Taiwan included phosphate and fertilisers.

Delegation visits chamber of industry

Later the Taiwanese delegation called at the Amman Chamber of Industry and discussed joint investment projects to be carried out in Jordan and expanding existing projects.

Discussion also centred on means of increasing the volume of trade between Taiwan and Jordan and adjusting the balance of trade which is clearly in favour of Taiwan.

The Jordanian side proposed setting up a joint plant to produce requirements for Jordanian students of school bags, sports wear and school equipment as well as processed foodstuffs, auto spare parts and other related schemes.

The Taiwanese team expressed readiness to take part in such projects and to provide expertise and know-how and said Taiwan will also be willing to help carry out Jordan's five-year national development schemes.

The team later visited the permanent industrial fair at the Amman Chamber of Industry and inspected national products on display there.

The team also visited the Sahab Industrial City near Amman and was briefed on the development of industries and facilities offered to investors and investment incentives.



The Taiwanese trade delegation Tuesday visits the permanent industrial fair at the Amman Chamber of Industry (Petra photo)

Rabat meeting urges increased aid to Arabs under occupation

AMMAN (Petra) — A meeting by the Arab Economic and Social Council held in Rabat called on the Arab states to increase their financial and in-kind assistance to the Arab people in the occupied territories and urged Arab countries to buy agricultural products from these territories, according to Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Saqqaf.

Saqqaf, in a statement upon returning here from the Rabat meeting, said that the council urged Arab financial institutions to provide credit facilities and guarantees to help finance the exportation and marketing of Palestinian products in Arab markets, and to support the Palestine Liberation Organisation's efforts worldwide to find new markets for Palestinian products.

He said the council urged Arab states to help build a fishing port at Gaza and a cement factory in Hebron in the occupied territories.

The Jordanian delegation presented a working paper to the meeting outlining the economic and social situation in the Israeli-held Arab lands, Saqqaf noted.

The council, he said, expressed appreciation to the European Community nations for their support of Palestinian people's rights and for adopting plans to set up economic projects benefiting the Palestinian people.

Greater Amman begins project to develop roads

AMMAN (Petra) — Greater Amman Municipality announced Tuesday that it has embarked on a project to develop roads and pavements within the capital at an estimated cost of JD 3.5 million.

A statement said that repair and improvement services will be introduced to the Prince Hassan Street, the Ali Ibn Abi Taleb Street, Al Quds Street, Al Muthanna Ibn Haritha Street and

Khawlah Bint Al Azwan Street, and that work will last 460 days.

The statement said that the project entails building culverts to drain away rain water, replacing old pavements with new ones, repaving road surfaces and painting pavements and installing traffic posts, signs and traffic lights.

According to the statement new diversions have been found to help ensure the flow of traffic.

Seminar discusses agrarian reforms, rural development

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day symposium opened here Tuesday to discuss the activities of the regional office entrusted with carrying out projects related to agrarian reform and rural development. The symposium, organised by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, is attended by delegates from Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia and Pakistan, in addition to representatives from the United Nations De-

velopment Programme and observers from Lebanon, North and South Yemen.

Addressing the opening session, Minister of Social Development Fawaz Touqan said that the process of good production has become a specialised industry involving the employment of modern technology and highly skilled labour. He underlined the importance of the Amman-based office which helps to promote rural development and the production of food.

Yarmouk seminar calls for strict penalties for smokers in banned areas

IRBID (J.T.) — A seminar on combatting smoking organised by Yarmouk University Tuesday wound up its sessions by issuing a set of recommendations designed to help eliminate the habit of smoking among Jordanians.

The seminar, which was sponsored by the Jordan National Anti-Smoking Society, appealed to the concerned authorities to amend a law on the protection of public health from the danger of smoking issued in 1977, to include provisions for strict penalties for violators of regulations, that ban smoking in public places.

The seminar urged the Ministry of Education to introduce specific curricula spreading awareness among students against the danger of smoking.

It urged organisers of all seminars, and conferences to assign specific places for smoking and said regulations banning smoking in public transport vehicles should be re-enforced.

The seminar urged the Ministry of Information to launch anti-smoking campaigns through the mass media, and the Ministry of Health to publish the recommendations and resolutions of the seminar to all students of schools, community colleges and universities.

The seminar urged universities to assign places for smokers on the campus and urged the Ministry of Health to name the first day of November every year as a national day for combating smoking in Jordan. It said that the day ought to be observed by organisations and educational institutions.

The seminar urged doctors to serve as an example for their patients and refrain from smoking; and senior officials to ban smoking in their offices.

The seminar also urged Yarmouk University and other concerned institutions to organise a national seminar on combatting smoking on an annual basis as part of the general campaign against the habit.

Participants in the seminar reviewed working papers underlining the dangers of smoking to public health in general and infants and pregnant women in particular.

Dr. Yousef Qousus, a noted cardiologist at the Al Hussein Medical Centre, presented a working paper that related smoking to heart and blood circulation diseases.

A working paper by Hind Abu Hamdi from the Health Ministry, showed that 71 per cent of Jordanian males and 44 of females are smokers and that most smokers are aged between 40 and 49 years.

Seminar discusses boosting role of women in community development

AMMAN (J.T.) — On its second day, a seminar on local community development Tuesday tackled the outlook of development in Jordan, operating methods of development councils and means of boosting women's role in local community development.

The seminar, which was chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QJAF), is aimed at widening the base of participation of community development around the Kingdom.

Dr. Hussein Al Khatib from the Ministry of Planning presented a paper on regional planning and development in Jordan.

His paper assessed the operating methods and philosophy of development councils around the country.

Mrs. Sataneh Shami and Lu-seen Taminian discussed ways of boosting women's role in local community development. In their paper, Taminian and Shami stated that a study on the economic, social, cultural and legal factors that affect women is essential for proper programming of ways to boost women's participation in local community development.

Dr. Faisal Bashabsheh, head of the Allam Social Development

Centre, presented a paper entitled "local community development — realities and outlooks," during which he presented an ideological perspective to local community development.

Bashabsheh stated that local community development was a comprehensive and complimentary process that puts to use the available social services and avoids overlap.

The seminar, which is expected to come up with recommendations after its final session Wednesday, is organised by the QJAF and the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development.

Jordan marks army day today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Today, Wednesday, March 1, 1989, marks the 33rd anniversary of the Arabisation of the Jordanian Armed Forces upon orders from His Majesty King Hussein.

The King ordered the termination of the services of General John Glubb, commander of the Armed Forces and said that

Jordanian officers should take up the command of the Armed Forces in the country.

The move was significant in view of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict and the dangers that Israel's occupation of Palestine posed to the Arab Nation.

It also came as a manifestation of Jordan's desire to rid itself of

foreign domination.

Since March 1, 1956 King Hussein has continually worked towards strengthening the Armed Forces and has made all efforts to ensure they were provided with the most up-to-date weapons required for defending the homeland.



Haj Hassan meets land transport union members

MINISTER of Transport and Telecommunications Khalid Al Haj Hassan Tuesday stressed the ministry's interest in dealing with all the difficulties facing the transport sector in Jordan and issued his directives to all the ministry departments concerned to coordinate with the various sectors concerned with transport, with a view to

reaching joint recommendations, capable of enhancing the transport sector in Jordan. Haj Hassan was speaking at a meeting attended by the Jordanian members in the Arab Land Transport Union, during which they reviewed the situation of land transport and discussed problems facing this sector. (Petra photo)

Anani calls for use of solar energy in development

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Scientific Society (RSS) President Jawad Anani Tuesday said that solar energy is a natural resource which should be utilised for socio-economic development, just like water, and mineral resources.

Addressing a 13-day specialised scientific symposium on design and manufacturing of solar cells and heaters, organised by the RSS solar energy research centre in cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Fund (UNIDO).

Anani pointed out that the RSS, through research, material tests and technical services it undertakes, contributes to the socio-economic development of the country. "However, the RSS activities are in line with Jordan's technological needs."

He added that the society gives high priority in its activities to the solar and wind energy, with the aim of developing such kind of energy to meet our needs and to design the equipment and the systems that serve our local needs.



Royal Scientific Society President Jawad Al Anani Tuesday speaks at a symposium on design and manufacturing of solar cells and heaters (Petra photo)

Anani thanked the UNIDO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their continuous support for the society's activities in the area of solar energy and for organising of the symposium.

UNIDO representative briefed participants on the organisation's

activities in the use of solar energy and outlined the importance of solar energy in developing remote villages.

He also paid tribute to the unique role played by the RSS in this sphere, saying that it has been a pioneer in this field, not

only at the local level, but also at both the Arab and international levels.

Attending the symposium are representatives of 15 Arab and foreign countries in addition to representatives of the private and public sectors in Jordan.

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Three cheers for Thatcher

BRITISH Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher struck a remarkably courageous note during her Paris press conference at the end of the Franco-British summit Monday, when she amplified the three principal conditions for the commencement of the peace process in the Middle East. By far the most notable of Mrs. Thatcher's triple sine qua non for starting the process of negotiations in the Middle East between the Arab parties and Israel is her call on the U.S. to be "firm" with Israel.

Mrs. Thatcher deserves to be commended for her outspokenness on the Israeli foot-dragging which clearly shows how much Britain is exasperated over the continued U.S. policy of playing second fiddle to Israeli leaders. Mrs. Thatcher is in the best position to talk straight to Washington as her credentials, as a strong ally of the U.S., are impeccable. This "enough is enough" message to Washington from London is not open for misinterpretations; it is as clear as words and intent can ever convey. To be sure, the implications and connotations of Mrs. Thatcher's heart to heart advice to Washington are obviously too clear and incisive to need elaborations.

In the same vein, President Francois Mitterrand has also expressed similar judgments on the peace process in the Middle East and the French leader's words hopefully would not fall on deaf ears in Tel Aviv and Washington. By calling on Israel to heed the new realities created by the PLO in the wake of the momentous decisions taken in Algiers last autumn, the British call on Washington to be firmer on Tel Aviv stands out as an act of unprecedented political and intellectual courage that could prove to be the very kind of political expression that would initiate the peace process in the Middle East on solid grounds. This is not to diminish the importance of the conditions prescribed by Mrs. Thatcher, namely, that the permanent member states of the U.N. Security Council should shoulder their responsibility for convening the projected international peace conference on the Middle East, and that the Palestinians should be engaged as well in the negotiations for the settlement of the Palestinian conflict. As the PLO is the internationally recognised representative of the Palestinian people, it would be the natural thing to have it attend the anticipated international conference and negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians the unique Palestinian dimension of the overall Arab-Israeli conflict.

Should Washington and Tel Aviv yield to the words of wisdom uttered by Margaret Thatcher, the ball of peace in the Middle East could really get rolling after all.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

AL Ra'i daily newspaper Tuesday tackled Israel's apprehension of the prospect of reviving the eastern front following Iraq's great successes in the Gulf war and Syria's continued military buildup. The paper said that the Israelis expressed their apprehension through Dan Shamron, their army's chief of staff, who hinted that Israel could be forced to launch a pre-emptive strike against the Arab forces to avoid being subjected to a new war. Shamron considers such an attack as legitimate because it will be in self-defence, and thus he explicitly reflects the mentality of his Zionist leaders who continue to believe in force to settle disputes, the paper noted. The paper said that Shamron and other Israeli leaders believe that war against the Arabs would save them from further internal divisions and would help Israel to live in peace. Israel's declared apprehension of the Arab forces could indeed be a prelude to a new aggression which, if launched this time, it would be costly for Israel, the paper noted. It said that Israel, which is facing extreme isolation from the rest of the world, due to its aggressive policies, is bound to face worldwide condemnation and total boycott from the world community should it launch a new military adventure, the paper added. In the meantime it said the Arabs should take such threats seriously and must be ready for any eventualities.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily comments on South Yemen's bid to join the newly created Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) which groups North Yemen, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt. Mahmoud Al Rimawi says that South Yemen's Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dali's statements published Monday give clear indication that Aden is seriously contemplating the idea of joining the new alliance, and is holding consultations to achieve that end. Rimawi notes that South Yemen and North Yemen are also taking steps for unity, and adds that if Aden's membership in the ACC is bound to help speed up unity between the two Yemens, then this membership should be welcomed not only by the Yemeni people but also by those of the four ACC countries. Rimawi says that the main aim of the Arab Cooperation Council which was proclaimed in Baghdad is to fulfil the aspirations of all Arabs for unity. He adds that the creation of a joint Jordanian-South Yemeni higher committee will no doubt help speedup this process.

Al Dustour daily tackles the current consultations between Arab leaders in the light of a visit to Baghdad Monday by Prime Minister Zaid Rifai. The paper said that a message delivered to the Iraqi president from His Majesty King Hussein explained the outcome of the monarch's contacts with world leaders attending the funeral of Emperor Hirohito in the past week. The paper said that the King's endeavours to serve his nation form a continuous process and are designed to open the way for a greater measure of close cooperation and joint action.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said that King Hussein is so keen on upholding the standards of the early Hashemite leaders who advocated Arab unity and freedom. The paper referred to the monarch's key role in pan-Arab action and in the on-going efforts to rally Arab ranks and consolidate their ranks in the face of common challenges. The paper's comment was in the light of a visit to Baghdad Monday by Prime Minister Zaid Rifai who conveyed the King's message to the Iraqi president and discussed questions of concern to the two countries. It said that in view of the major challenges posed to the Arab Nation there is no alternative to continued consultations and rallying of ranks.

Fly me to the moon

By Riad Al Khouri

Governor General and former Foreign Minister Bill Hayden has described the treaty as "an effective international instrument for the regulation of states' activities in Antarctica in the interest of all Mankind."

Hayden has also talked about the amicable and cooperative atmosphere characteristic of the Antarctic Treaty system. Does all this sound too good to be true? Yes, absolutely. The South Pole is not the scene of violent clashes over natural resources, nor for that matter are conflicting claims over the seabed now causing major tension between states. But if recent history is anything to go by, big problems in these areas are only a matter of time. The North American giant as well as the near-giants of Europe and Japan, are struggling more ferociously than ever for economic spheres of influence; it's not difficult to imagine all sorts of trouble being caused by the rich power of the North in places like Antarctica. (For example, the Falklands conflict of 1982 had an element of seabed economics in it.) I hope I'm wrong, but the greed of the developed countries is bound to affect the whole globe, from the ozone layer to the bottom of the ocean. Is there a solution to this problem? Probably not, human nature being what it is.

A capacity for rapacity will keep the world in turmoil, with "developing" underdogs struggling against starvation and poverty. The current accommodation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union will probably provide a breathing spell in this process. But in a few years, look out: the world after 1992's 12-nation

European mega-merger is going to be a fantastically competitive place, and the poor South is going to suffer even more. By the end of the millennium not even the ocean floor and Antarctica are going to be spared involvement in this process. And then? Yes you guessed it: the Moon. The science fiction of our parents has become mundane reality, and as the race on Earth for economic domination continues, the Moon and eventually the planets are bound to become objects of competition, peaceful or otherwise. And if the mess on earth gets even more out of hand, as it probably will, a brave new lunar world would no doubt be an ideal solution for Americans and others who want to get away from it all. Does this sound grotesquely fanciful? Maybe, but lots of scientific and other things happening today were literally unimaginable only a few years ago.

Take the Soviet Phobos mission: The recent conquest of a Martian Moon is going to be a modest prelude to spectacular interplanetary trips by the Russians and their friends. (And feminists will no doubt take comfort in the knowledge, that women are much better at withstanding the harmful effects of long space flight). Meanwhile, back on Earth, the rich are getting richer in many cases at the expense of the poor. Does it make sense under these conditions to foray out into space? Whatever the answer, the twin phenomena of economic and scientific expansion are here to stay.

Riad Al Khouri is a Beirut-based economic consultant and businessman.

Red Cross brings crutches and voice of conscience to Kabul

By Oliver Wates
Reuters

KABUL — It takes more than the threat of a vicious civil war to drive the Red Cross out of Kabul, where it struggled for seven years to gain a foothold.

The Swiss-based organisation now provides top-class hospital treatment, crutches for the crippled, and above all a nagging voice of conscience for both the government and its rebel opponents.

"I tell you frankly that I don't know what the future will bring," said the Red Cross's dynamic chief delegate Jean-Jacques Fressard. "But the people of Afghanistan need us and we cannot stop any of our activities for too long."

The comfortable Red Cross hospital in a converted private house has 50 beds but a new 100-bed ward is ready for when the 10-year-old civil war hots up again.

"We only take war-wounded, that is what we are here for," said nurse Esther Stebler, 31, from Basel in Switzerland.

"Mines are a big problem but we also have gunshot wounds to the chest, explosions, rockets, frostbite, reconstruction surgery and so on. You have to have a really broad variety of skills to be a surgeon in a place like this."

said, referring to fears Kabul would become a battleground as the Western-backed rebels tried to overthrow President Najibullah's government.

The Red Cross orthopaedic centre, closed on Feb. 8, reopened on March 1. It is desperately needed.

When it began fitting artificial legs and issuing crutches and wheelchairs just under a year ago, it drew 1,600 patients in three days. The waiting list stretches until 1991.

"We could not take away the few medical staff there are in Afghanistan," he said. "You are teaching all day long, explaining everything 200 times, it's very tiring. Some people hardly understand English and we have to turn them into good nurses."

Afghanistan is overwhelmingly Muslim, which brings its own problems. "You can't expect the local nurses to wash a man, we have to do that ourselves," Stebler says.

Some women patients are loath to take off the burgas, the head-to-toe veil worn by conservative Afghans. "Sometimes we have to cut holes in the burgas to treat a wound," Stebler said.

The Red Cross also distributes medicine to other hospitals and clinics in Kabul. But its main task, for which it was founded 125

years ago, is more political. "We are here to convince the parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law," Fressard said.

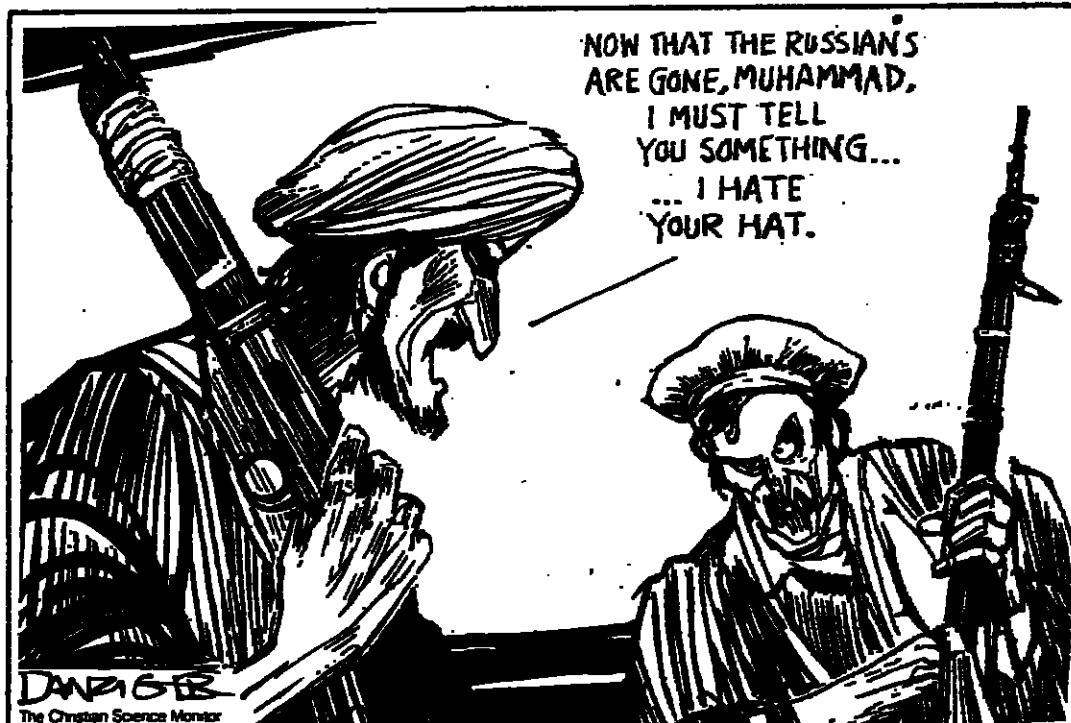
The Red Cross operates in a country only if its delegates, who are all Swiss, are allowed to visit all political prisoners regularly and in private.

It took from 1980 to 1987 before the Red Cross was satisfied it could start work in Afghanistan and the delegation was set up in March 1988.

Fressard, hardened through observing battles at Palestinian camps in Lebanon, seemed almost surprised at the success of this side of the mission.

"We are sure that we have seen 90 per cent of sentenced political prisoners in Afghanistan," he said. "It's not just here, we also visit prisoners held by the Mujahadeen (rebels) on the other side."

"Both sides are playing the game, I am really amazed," he said. "It doesn't cost them anything politically, they are really giving us an easy time."



An important task re-establishing contact between prisoners and their families. Letters are delivered around the country and in refugee camps in Pakistan.

Behind the scenes, the Red Cross lobbies the government and rebels over any treatment of prisoners it considers breaches the Geneva conventions or other international humanitarian law.

"The idea is to leave some message behind you," Fressard said. "Actually there are all sorts of verses in the Koran which are very close to our principles."

Pensioners band together to scare major Australian parties

By Robert Woodward
Reuters

SYDNEY — Greypower is the fastest growing political force in Australia.

Elderly Australians fed up with what they see as years of neglect have banded together to scare established political parties into taking their expectations seriously.

Greypower hit the headlines this month when it captured around six per cent of the vote in a closely fought western Australian state election, won by the ruling Labour Party.

"We've made an impact and shown the voters there is an alternative to the two major parties," Greypower founder Doug Ratcliffe told journalists.

The party failed to win a seat but influenced the result in many constituencies through a complicated preference vote system.

Western Australia's Greypower was founded last June when Ratcliffe, a retired civil engineer, heard a widowed pensioner complain on local radio about her treatment by tax officials.

He discovered her plight was not unusual and decided action must be taken. "This terrible state of affairs has to be corrected. It was time to leave the ringside seats and to get into the ring myself," he said.

Six months later, after Ratcliffe preached his gospel of pensioner self-defence in shopping centres and the letter pages of his local newspaper, 37,000 people voted for the 42 Greypower candidates.

Ratcliffe tapped a reservoir of anger among Australia's 2.17 million pensioners who say they have been neglected in favour of other

disadvantaged groups such as the young unemployed.

Australia imposes a means test on old age pensions. Both income and assets are assessed.

For every dollar a single person earns a week above 40 dollars (\$36) his or her pension of 124 dollars (\$112) is cut by 50 cents (\$30.45).

Pressure groups such as the Australian Retired Persons Association have lobbied for years for a pension increase, the scrapping of the means test and transport concessions for pensioners in all states.

But apart from a low-key pensioners party in Victoria, the elderly had eschewed political involvement until this year.

"We are not aligned to any political party," said Barbara Grey-Gardner of the Seniors Action Committee pressure group. "There is a general feeling that if

we approach the parties as a separate entity we have a wider chance of success."

Grey-Gardner and others believe Greypower will not last as it does not represent most pensioners' aspirations, being concerned mostly with the problems of the former self-employed and middle class.

Greypower's attempt to influence the next federal election, expected within 12 months, has also been hit by antagonism between two of its leaders.

Ratcliffe's party was almost still-born after Robert Clark, founder of another greypower party in New South Wales, opposed its application for registration as a political party.

The two still refuse to talk to each other and despite strong Greypower support in South Australia and Queensland there are no plans for a national conference to coordinate policies.

While Ratcliffe's party addresses a wide range of issues Clark is solely interested in pensioners.

"Other political parties have a multitude of objectives and the welfare of the elderly gets lost. In their opinion the best thing the elderly can do is quickly crawl away and die," said Clark who is convinced his party will win a seat in Australia's most populous state in the next federal election.

Greypower's showing in Western Australia certainly worried other parties, particularly the Democrats whose leader Janine Haines labelled Greypower supporters "geriatric fascists." The Democrats polled just one per cent.

Soon after Haines's jibe newspapers revealed Clark had been involved in campaigning in the 1970s to keep non-white immigrants out of Australia.

A former Greypower official also said a Greypower meeting in Sydney town hall last year was infiltrated by racist groups who handed out anti-Asian and anti-Jewish literature.

Apart from pensioners' role as voters — 20 per cent of the 10.5 million electorate are retired — one of the problems facing the government is how to deal with a rapidly ageing population and the drain on federal resources this will cause.

Official estimates suggest that by 2005 about 12 per cent of the population will be over 65 and this could rise to 16 per cent.

The government has turned down pensioner calls for a national summit on the elderly but a prime ministerial task force set up last year is due to report soon on how to tackle the problems of the aged.

Is 600-ship U.S. navy a dream?

By Charles Aldinger
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The crunch in U.S. budget spending and shifting American defence priorities are combining to sink the navy's dream of a 600-ship fleet.

Despite a record \$2.5 trillion peacetime defence build-up under former President Ronald Reagan, the navy has not reached its 600-ship goal. Defence experts say, and Pentagon officials concede, that it may never be reached.

"The goal certainly remains valid. But we are concentrating now on maintaining 15 carrier battle groups. They are the key (to surface power)," said commander Mark Baker, a navy spokesman.

Baker and other defence officials told Reuters, however, that expected budget cuts in 1990 and possibly beyond could mean that the number of battle groups that escort aircraft carriers may have to be reduced.

Before he left office in January, former Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci decided to order the early retirement of 16 older U.S. frigates to save money and manpower.

He told Congress in January that the move, along with fiscal

constraints and other factors, would "postpone achievement of the (600-ship) goal beyond the turn of the century."

At September 30, 1988 — the end of the fiscal year — naval strength stood at 565 ships, up from 479 before Reagan took office at the beginning of 1981.

The navy is currently building 15 ships and had asked for another 20 in the fiscal year 1990. But ships are also being retired, and President George Bush has agreed to slash \$6 billion from Reagan's 1990 Pentagon budget request of \$315.2 billion.

One senior defence official, who asked not to be identified, said that in future the emphasis may have to be on a smaller navy of high-technology surface craft and submarines to deal with growing Soviet naval sophistication.

"But even if we have to retire some older carriers early to reduce costs over the short term, we have got to keep 15 battle groups available to deal with trouble spots," he said.

The Soviet navy is increasing its own emphasis on carriers even though it has cut deep-water "steaming hours" in recent years and may be planning to reduce its total fleet as part of Mikhail Gorbachev's push to reduce Mos-

cow's military budget.

"There's no doubt that reduced budgets here and improving relations with the Soviet Union are bringing pressure on us to make changes in military strategy," said a senior Bush administration official, who also asked not to be identified.

"We are pressing Japan to take much more control of the sea lanes off its coasts, but I don't see how we can ask the European allies to do a lot more in the way of naval power," he told Reuters.

"The writing is on the wall," said retired Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll from the Centre for Defence Information in Washington. "Ships are expensive and we can't afford either to build or to man 600 of them."

Barry Blechman, a military expert with the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, spoke along similar lines.

"While you're building ships, you're retiring ships," he said. "And lower budgets over the next several years are going to force reductions in manpower."

It costs at least \$1 million a day to keep a big nuclear aircraft carrier at sea with a crew of 5,000 and more than 100 aircraft. Escort ships and crews are not included in that figure.

China intellectuals forge unity

By Guy Dinmore
Reuters

PEKING — In a small, dimly lit Peking bar a young man reads out an open letter signed by prominent intellectuals calling for the release of all political prisoners in China.

Perhaps a commonplace event now among well organized dissidents in the Soviet Union or much of Eastern Europe but in China it marks a significant break with the past.

The letter, carrying 33 signatures and sent to the Communist Party and parliament Thursday, calls for the release of Wei Jingsheng, a dissident serving a 15-year jail sentence, and all other prisoners of conscience.

"It's very good news. It shows their commitment. China's intellectuals are becoming more independent," Fang Lizhi, a well known scientist and once almost a lone voice in his outspoken criticism of the authorities, commented Friday.

Fang, expelled from the party last year, said he believed it was the first such open petition calling for an amnesty.

"I think there will be more intellectuals who will sign... the more signatures, the more pressure on the authorities to react," the professor said.

Wu Zuguang, a 72-year-old playwright who was also forced to leave the party last year, said the letter reflected widespread hopes among China's intellectuals for an amnesty.

"I think a lot of people will add their signatures," he said. "I am optimistic about an amnesty."

Rumours of a possible amnesty have circulated in Peking in recent months. But this week a parliamentary spokesman said an act of clemency was so far not on the agenda of the national legislature, which starts its annual session on March 20.

A dissident active in the brief period of liberalisation known as the "Peking Spring" of the late 1970s predicted China's disaffected and badly paid intellectuals would become increasingly vocal in their demands for human rights.

"This letter is a beginning, small but significant," he said. He asked not to be named.

"China's intellectuals are becoming more active," commented Su Shaozhi, formerly a leading party theoretician who was dismissed last year as head of the prestigious Institute for Marxism, Leninism and Mao Tse-tung Thought.

The letter represented a broad spectrum of intellectuals and was a rare display of common action.

Among them were people like Wu and Su who have come under fire from party campaigns against liberalism since 1985 and who were persecuted in the 1950s and 60-year-old poet Bing Xin who had forced labour in the cultural revolution of the 1960s.

"It's a break in the silence of intellectuals," said Chen Jun, a signatory who read the letter to foreign reporters Thursday night in a private bar he runs in central Peking.

The petition says it was written in support of Fang, who wrote a letter to senior leader Deng Xiaoping last month calling for Wei's freedom.

Wei was the editor of an unofficial pro-democracy magazine in Peking. Tried in October, 1979, he was jailed for 15 years for counter-revolutionary crimes and is believed by dissidents to be in a Peking prison after spending several years in a labour camp in central China.

Fang said he had received no reply.

The letter said an amnesty in 1989 — the 40th anniversary of Communist China's founding and the 70th anniversary of the May 4th movement of patriotic intellectuals — would benefit China's reforms and accord with a growing global respect for rights.

Burmese town looks forward to revival of tourist trade

By Tom Heneghan
Reiner

PAGAN, Burma — The souvenir shop owner took the banknote in his hands, held it up to the light and then kissed the grimy paper three times.

"This is the first money I've earned since August," he declared. "It's like I've opened up a new shop."

Just down Pagan's main road, another shopkeeper excitedly dusted off lacquerware boxes, teak elephants, tin gongs and gems of questionable quality.

"You are a good omen — first tourist for six months," he whispered. "We have been selling our gold to buy food. Now business will be back soon. Buy something, please."

Pagan, Burma's royal capital between 1057 and 1287 but now a dusty town surrounded by hundreds of crumbling Buddhist temples and pagodas, still feels the effects of anti-government protests that brought the country to a halt last summer.

Almost totally dependent on tourism, it suffered a body-blow when Rangoon decided in early August to stop all visits because of violent clashes between troops and marchers. Diplomats said 1,000 people were killed.

Although there was no unrest in Pagan, hotels and guest houses in this sleepy town on the Irrawaddy River in central Burma emptied. Nobody came to buy the town's distinctive black lacquerware or enjoy its fish curries and mustard-leaf soup.

Tour guides and drivers, accustomed to shuttling sightseers around the brick and stone ruins scattered over 40 square kilometres, waited without work.

Specks of gold
Some of Pagan's 5,000 residents became so desperate they dug holes in the fields and panned under the hot sun for specks of

gold left over from its glittering heyday.

A good day's panning among the temples, cactus trees and thorn bushes could yield up to a dollar's worth of gold flecks washed off gilded stupas or left from gold-threaded cloth the Burmese royalty used to wear, residents said.

In normal times, they said, craft sellers could make over \$300 a month. The army, which crushed the democracy movement last September, began readmitting foreign tourists in mid-December but the tight restrictions it imposed hardly made the visit a leisurely holiday.

The trail-blazing group of West German tourists were free to roam around the deserted temples and pagodas that, in English writer Somerset Maugham's words, "loom huge" remote and mysterious, like the vague recollections of a fantastic dream.

Followed by plainclothes police and barred from leaving their bus to shop, the tourists were the ones who seemed remote and mysterious to the few people who saw them.

"They looked like prisoners," one resident commented.

Glancing repeatedly over his shoulder, a visitor to an annual temple fair said officials drove through the bamboo hut town before the tourists' arrival with loudspeakers telling residents not to talk to the rare visitors.

A group of 46 foreign correspondents brought from Bangkok on an unprecedented official tour in mid-January also passed through the town almost unnoticed except at the riverside Thiripitsaya hotel where they stayed.

"We want democracy," "I didn't hear anything about them," said one shop owner with a look of lost opportunity.

Controls eased a bit by late January, when some West German and American tourists were allowed to roam the dusty main road and the narrow lanes of the market set up for an annual fair at the white-washed Ananda temple in the centre of Pagan.

But at least a dozen soldiers, barefoot out of respect for Buddhist tradition, patrolled the temple grounds as over 200 monks and novices lined up for bowls of rice, bananas and other food donated by the faithful.

Outside, among the stalls selling used spectacles, repaired umbrellas and oil cans cut out of beer tins, young boys struggled to practise their shaky English with phrases like "hello. What is your name? We want democracy."

Although more acute, Pagan's problems mirror the difficulties the underdeveloped tourist industry in all of Burma has had since August.

January, usually the height of the season because of the mild weather, will see only 200 visitors coming to Burma this year instead of 4,675 in 1988, tourist officials said.

Tourist Burma, which used to fill two Fokker F-27 planes with tourists on the Rangoon-Pagan-Mandalay-Heho-Rangoon circuit every day, now has only three flights a week on that run.

To add to its problems, Burma Airways' safety record is so poor that several Western embassies urge their nationals not to take its flights. A Fokker F-27 crash in Rangoon Feb. 3, the fourth in 18 months, killed 26 passengers, all Burmese.

The bottom line is that the cash-strapped government, which lost all foreign aid after its bloody suppression of the Democracy movement, has forfeited most of the \$4 million it would normally have earned during the winter season.

To foreigners watching a golden



den sunset across the Irrawaddy from Pagan's highest vantage point atop the steep Thatbyinnyu temple, "the fewer tourists, the better," may be a common reaction. The shopkeepers have been through that, though, and are

eagerly awaiting the day the packed tour buses will return. Told more tourists should be coming now that the standard seven-day visas were available again, all they ask is: "When? How many? Where are they now?"

The French Revolution reenacted step by step To relive a revolution

By Patrick Olivier

PARIS — Thanks to the very numerous programmes devoted, by television channels, to the French Revolution, on the occasion of its bicentenary, the French are going to be able to relive this capital event in their history, practically day by day.

It is natural for the French Revolution to be of the greatest interest in France, as everyone is aware that France owes her present Democratic system (which is not so widespread in the world) to it. This system efficiently protects people's fundamental rights, beginning with the right to freedom, the freedom to come and go, the freedom of thought and of expression, and the freedom to choose their governors. France is, indeed, one of those countries where it was decided, once and for all, that the governors were at the service of the people and not the opposite.

Birth of liberty

This birth of liberty was difficult and sometimes terrible. The French Revolution was the most eventful and the most fruitful period in French history, and television is getting ready to show all its aspects. Thrills are guaranteed in a vast panorama.

The greatest means have been brought together (the best authors, actors and directors have been working for months) and French viewers have already been able to watch the origins of the French Revolution on their screens with "1788". In this film, the distress of the peasants compared to the privileged aristocrats was brought out. "Un Medecin des Lumieres", for its part, showed the public of today the extreme misery of the people of the time, faced with the scourge of disease and epidemics. Medicine practically did not exist. This is a way of appreciating the progress which has been made since then.

Television is also going to show all the important personalities of that time, brought alive through the magic of pictures: Mirabeau with his bloated orator's face and destructive eloquence, Louis XVI in "L'Ete de la Revolution" and touching Marie-Antoinette in the serial "La Comtesse de Charny."

Epics

Vast, more didactic panoramas will develop all the phases of the Revolution: a big epic "Pour que vive la Liberte" which will last



Danton — a great personality of the French revolution

four times 90 minutes has been produced by A2, with 30,000 extras, and 160 days of shooting under the direction of John Guillermin, the director of "The Towering Inferno." A2 has gone all the way for the Revolution with five fiction films, six documentaries and a hundred hours of programmes.

There will also be "L'Histoire de la Revolution Francaise" (six hours of viewing) and "Le Souffle de la Liberte."

The Revolution will sometimes be seen from unusual angles.

"Les Nuits Revolutionnaires", a serial with seven times 52 minutes, brings the different view of an author from the 18th century, Restif de la Bretonne. It is a highly documented description of Paris life at the time. There is also "Un Citoyen sans Importance," the story of a man who has to work in the prosecutions office and who attempts to save human lives.

There are also regional views with "Les Chapeliers" (TFI) which takes place in Brittany, and female views with "Manon Roland, la source de la Revolution".

The Revolution also means love and passion. And goodness knows passions were intensified at a time when, in the words of I. A. Fayette, "there was no knowing if one would be alive the next day."

On the passion side, viewers will be spoiled with "La Grande Cabriole" (4 times a hundred minutes) which recounts the tumultuous love affairs of four heroes caught up in the whirl wind.

There will be less romance and more "naughtiness" with "Les Jupons de la Revolution" which will describe the passionate or frivolous love-affairs of the great "Lovers" of the period: Mirabeau, Talleyrand, etc.

Television-viewers, for their part, will not remain inactive. They will be judges in the big court cases, presented live on television: Louis XVI, Danton, Robespierre will once again be tried by the French who will be called upon to vote for or against them. There is little chance that Robespierre, the advocate of the single party and of the ensuing "Terror" would be acquitted. On the other hand, if Louis XVI, who was sentenced with a majority of one vote, is rehabilitated, it will be necessary, very democratically, to reinstate the Monarchy in France!

Enthusiasts for the Revolution will have their money's worth. A "Diary of the Revolution" is being planned. There will even be a programme "Day by day", in which the Revolution will be presented in the form of a newflash (135 times 1mm 30).

Television-viewers suffering from an overdose are recommended to fall back on "L'Histoire de la Revolution": just one hour in all!

Many of these numerous programmes will be seen abroad. The French Revolution does not only belong to the history of France. It belongs to the history of the world — French features.

Life beyond the tobacco road

Tobacco use in the developing world will drain people's health and government treasuries unless immediate and thoughtful measures are taken. The highland tactics of the tobacco companies are seen behind the rise in smoking.

By Judith Mackay

HONG KONG — Tobacco kills approximately 2.5 million people each year. It is the largest single preventable cause of death in the world today. But how many smokers would extinguish their

cigarettes in response to that statistic? Few if any. Cancer, coronary heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, chronic bronchitis, emphysema — the list of diseases brought on by tobacco is long. Contrary to popular opinion,

the greatest number of deaths from tobacco occurs not in old age, but in the prime of life. One quarter of smokers die prematurely. Thus tobacco comes under a unique risk category — far ahead of other consumer goods such as alcohol, sugar, cars or motor bikes. While most other consumer goods are dangerous when abused or misused, tobacco is simply dangerous when used as intended by the manufacturer.

The dangers of tobacco have long been accepted by all competent scientists; the only challenge to this medical consensus comes from the tobacco industry. The major concern now is about mounting tobacco use in developing countries. While tobacco markets are decreasing in the West at the rate of one per cent a year, smoking is increasing in developing countries at an average of two per cent a year. For every smoker who quits in the United States or Europe, two people start smoking in a developing country.

Developing regions

The number of cigarettes smoked has outstripped population growth in all developing regions. Why? Because, a group of World Health Organisation experts commented recently, the transnational tobacco companies have launched "intensive and ruthless" promotional campaigns in these countries. The legislative

controls and other measures — which in industrialised countries succeed in limiting the use of tobacco — either do not exist or are at best inadequate, the experts found.

The experts predicted that smoking diseases "will appear in developing countries before communicable diseases and malnutrition have been controlled, and thus the gap between rich and poor countries will widen further."

Up to now, more than 50 per cent of men but only five per cent of women smoke in developing countries compared to about 30 per cent of both sexes in the industrialised world. The challenge in the Third World, therefore, is to maintain these low smoking rates among women while reducing the high smoking rates among men.

Few countries can afford the costs of smoking, less so the developing countries. Tobacco consumption drains not only the individual smoker's resources but also government funds. The benefits from transnational companies bringing their tobacco business to the Third World are questionable.

"Tobacco economics is sham economics," says Dr. Roberto Masironi, the coordinator of the WHO Programme on Tobacco or Health. The price that countries have to pay for tobacco use usually far outweighs the "benefits" of tax collected. The costs include

medical and health costs; the expense of lost productivity; social welfare costs resulting from premature death and disability; fire losses; the lost use of land that could have been used to grow food.

In Asia, most of the profits from the sale of tobacco by the transnational tobacco companies benefit neither the countries nor the people. Instead, the profits are returned to the boardrooms and shareholders of the industrial world. In Beijing recently, a senior health official likened this to "a new opium war."

Nowhere is the tobacco battle being fought more vigorously than in Asia. World Tobacco, the industry's journal, recently reported "bright future... for Asia Pacific" and promised traders "growth potential" and "more smokers" with emphasis on the potential Chinese market. In the same edition, the tobacco industry confidently predicted: "The most conservative estimation is that sales in Asia will increase by 18 per cent by the year 2000."

The tobacco industry operates with a different standard in developing countries. Cigarettes are sold in many countries without health warnings that would be compulsory in their country of origin. The tax content of cigarettes sold in Asia is higher than in industrialised countries. Promotional campaigns have especially targeted women.

— Academic File.

CANCER

切勿嘗試吸煙

A Hong Kong poster conveys the anti-smoking message in Chinese inscription — with a little help from the condemned commodity.



A scene from "La grande cabriole"

<p>Cinema</p> <p>CONCORD Tel: 677420</p> <p>Mahmoud Abdul Aziz In The World on the Wing of a Pigeon (Arabic)</p> <p>Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 9:00</p>	<p>Cinema</p> <p>NIJOUN Tel: 675571</p> <p>THE PRINCIPAL</p> <p>Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p>Cinema</p> <p>PLAZA Tel: 677420</p> <p>ZAPPED!</p> <p>Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p>
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Europe businessmen fear Rushdie affair will hinder trade with Iran

LONDON (R) — The storm over Salman Rushdie's "Satanic Verses" has raised questions over a scramble by European firms to do business with Iran almost before the ink is dry on their new contracts.

The European Community (EC), which has decided to withdraw heads of mission from Tehran in protest at Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's death sentence on the British author, has stopped short of imposing formal trade sanctions against Iran.

But a tough political line by Britain and West Germany is already threatening to stall trade financing, needed if Iran is to rebuild after eight years of war with Iraq.

"The European Community wants to make a political point to Tehran," said Hans Heino Koppitz, political analyst at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

"It does not want to jeopardise trade relations but the row may well hit trade financing," he noted.

Some European companies had carefully maintained contacts dating back more than 10 years to the Shah of Iran's era. Others had painstakingly forged new ties with the revolutionary regime.

Ceasefire with Iraq last August appeared to signal a new era of trade. European companies had the expertise in key oil and power sectors. Iran had oil money and was contemplating large scale borrowing from Western banks.

The line between diplomatic and trade sanctions has become increasingly blurred since Monday and it is evident that some EC nations are pursuing a harder line than others.

British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe made clear last week he was sceptical about trade sanctions. But analysts say Britain's strong reaction to the Rushdie death threat means its businessmen can effectively put deals on hold.

West Germany appears to be pursuing an even harder line.

Bonn has refused to rule out trade sanctions and has suspended talks with Tehran on a three to five billion mark (\$1.7 to \$2.7 billion) credit line. Initial talks on larger guarantees on

West German exports to Iran have been frozen.

West German business, hoping for lucrative power generation projects, has protested and the conservative daily Die Welt said in an editorial: "The federal government should not allow itself to be pushed into economic sanctions."

Frustration among businessmen in West Germany and Britain has grown as it becomes clear that some EC nations are reluctant to jeopardise their companies' business contracts.

Italy, Iran's third largest trading partner, has been keen to cash in on reconstruction and in January resolved a long-standing dispute over payment for port facilities at the Gulf of Bandar Abbas.

Foreign Trade Minister Renato Ruggiero said then that Italian firms were negotiating deals worth around \$3 billion and the two nations signed a trade protocol.

"The accords signed last month are valid and we plan on adhering to them," a ministry spokesman said Friday.

In France, a finance ministry official said there were no plans

to slow improving commercial relations with Iran after diplomatic ties were restored in June 1988.

Contracts on oil, cars and railway equipment were signed during a visit to Tehran earlier this month by Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, the first by a French minister since the Islamic revolution 10 years ago.

In Belgium, a group of chemical companies recently returned from Tehran convinced of the market's potential.

Other Community nations have kept a low profile. Portugal, with a light arms industry that supplied both Iran and Iraq during the war, has refrained from making any public comment.

Iran's need for foreign currency to pay an annual import bill of \$4 to \$5 billion for essential, non-military goods has led to a flurry of activity at European banks which had not lent it long-term funds since the Shah's fall.

Officials from Iran's banks had considerable success in sounding out British, French and West German banks. But bankers say many potential credit lines are now on hold.

Syria to raise oil production to 450,000 b/d by next year

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Syria is involved in oilfield development which could raise its total production to 450,000 barrels a day in 1990, an oil newsletter has reported.

The respected Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said that by next month, stepped-up production in new fields will bring Syrian production to 355,000 barrels a day.

Syrian production in 1988 was 270,000 barrels a day.

New fields being developed by the Fint Petroleum Co. and expected to be operating in 1990 could add 100,000 barrels a day to total production, the newsletter said.

Egypt to cut oil exports

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt decided Tuesday to increase its crude oil-export prices for the first half of March by 15 cents a barrel for all grades, a senior oil ministry official said.

Hammad Ayoub, the ministry's foreign sales director, said Egypt also has decided to decrease oil exports by five per cent under an agreement by non-OPEC producers in a meeting in London on Feb. 21.

He did not say exactly how much that would amount to, but the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES), published in Nicosia, reported Monday that Egypt's cut amounts to 24,000 barrels a day.

The new price for a barrel of Egypt's top-grade Gulf of Suez blend is \$14.90, for Belayim \$14.05, for Ras Badran \$12.90 and for Ras Ghareb \$12.60.

Greeks press demands amid piles of refuse and unburied dead

ATHENS (R) — Greek unions vowed Tuesday to maintain strikes threatening to disrupt the tourist industry, with travellers to Greece facing cancelled flights and mountains of refuse on the streets when they finally arrive.

Strikes by air traffic controllers and municipal garbage collectors, in support of pay rises above inflation, are part of a wave of recent stoppages affecting doctors, hospital staff, bank and railway employees, teachers and industrial workers.

The refuse is piling up in Athens and elsewhere, lining the streets and the squares full of pavement cafes and blocking thoroughfares. Residents have to pick their way through rubbish to get into shops and apartment blocks.

Special teams at the health and public order ministries met all day to seek ways of dealing with the growing health hazard and nuisance.

Gravediggers have also gone on strike, causing delays of up to two days in burying the dead. Security personnel have been called in to dig graves in some areas.

Union leaders said Tuesday they would continue strikes until their demands were met.

A spokesman for the Confederation of Greek Industry, which groups 70 labour federations, said: "We intend to press on until our goals are met."

Kostas Skouras, general secretary of the National Tourist Organisation, said: "The good image of the city for residents and tourists alike is certainly being spoiled by the garbage."

Hotels and restaurants catering for tourists were trying to ease the discomfort of visitors, he said.

Refuse collectors have prolonged their week-old strike until

Sunday, raising the possibility of the Socialist government calling in troops to clear away the garbage, as it did in December 1986.

Air traffic controllers stopped all flights on two evenings this week and intend to stage further stoppages.

The Confederation of Greek Workers, which has two million members, plans to strike Thursday.

"This will be the largest strike in recent years and will certainly paralyse the whole country," a spokesman said.

Other workers on strike or planning stoppages this week include insurance company employees, chemical industry workers, railway workers and university teachers.

The unions want guaranteed pay rises above inflation, now running at 14 per cent, and the Confederation of Greek Workers has called for a 19.5 per cent increase.

The Municipal Workers' Federation, which represents the garbage collectors and grave diggers, are pressing for a 15 per cent pay rise and full contracts for 4,000 part-time workers.

Economy Minister Panayiotis Roumeliotis wants wages to rise by no more than 17 per cent. Initial offers by public and private employers have been around nine per cent.

The unions have launched the full assault on Roumeliotis's incomes policy in the apparent hope of gaining concessions from the government ahead of elections in June.

Several private economists have predicted that the party which wins the elections will have to impose an austerity programme to deal with inflation and a public sector deficit estimated at 15 per cent of gross domestic product.

U.S. reports higher inflation

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. inflation was running faster than first thought in the final months of 1988 even though the economy was slowing down, the government said Tuesday.

The Commerce Department said the implicit price deflator, a broad gauge of inflation that measures price changes in total economic output, rose at a 5.3 per cent annual rate between October and December and not by 4.7 per cent as estimated a month ago.

The growth rate in the gross national product (GNP), the total output of goods and services, was 2.0 per cent in the fourth quarter the same as estimated a month ago.

The 5.3 per cent rise in the GNP deflator followed an increase of 4.7 per cent in the third quarter.

An alternative inflation gauge, the GNP fixed weights price index, rose at a 4.2 per cent rate between October and December, down from 5.3 per cent in the third quarter but up from the preliminary estimate of 4.0 per cent.

The inflation figures underscored the challenge facing Federal Reserve (Fed) Board Chairman Alan Greenspan, who has tightened credit aggressively in recent weeks in an attempt to put a lid on mounting price pressures in the economy.

Last Friday the Fed underlined its determination to curb inflation by raising its discount rate, the interest it charges on loans to commercial banks, from 6.5 per cent to 7.0 per cent, its highest in almost three years.

In doing so, Greenspan ran the risk of upsetting President Bush who maintains that inflation is not a serious problem and that he is unhappy with rising interest rates.

For all of 1988 the economy grew at a brisk 3.8 per cent rate after inflation compared with 3.4 per cent in 1987.

The 2.0 per cent fourth-quarter growth rate, lower than Wall Street forecasts of 2.5 per cent, was the slowest since the final quarter of 1986 when GNP rose by 1.4 per cent.

If the figures had not been affected by the early-summer drought, which led to losses in crop and livestock output, the growth rate last quarter would have been about 3.1 per cent.

The increase underlined Greenspan's assessment last week that economic expansion, now in its seventh year which is a peacetime record, remains vigorous and unusually well-balanced. The figures were adjusted to remove the effects of inflation and seasonal factors.

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- Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of 40 hopper wagons and spares as described in the specifications and according to the general conditions mentioned in the tender documents.
- Tender documents can be purchased on payment of a non-refundable sum of JD 160, from A.R.C. representative in our liaison office at Amman Station or from Ma'an offices of A.R.C.
- The last date for submission of offers is 12.00 O'clock Wednesday 3.5.1989. The tenders are required to be submitted in a large sealed envelope, on which shall be written clearly the name and the number of the tender, and which should contain two sealed envelopes, one in respect of the technical offer and the other in respect of the financial offer. Sealed tenders are to be handed over to the Chief Clerk, A.R.C. head office at Ma'an.

Mardi Qatamin
Director General

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Drug money bust casts shadow over Los Angeles jewel market

LOS ANGELES (R) — The Los Angeles jewellery market, a bustling district in the heart of the city, concealed the most extensive drug money laundering enterprise ever uncovered in the United States, federal prosecutors say.

The jewellery market, housed in a string of dingy buildings, is the country's second largest with an estimated annual turnover of \$1 billion.

But authorities believe that some retail booths and wholesale offices were also busy helping

Latin American drug traffickers launder at least \$1 billion in proceeds from cocaine sales.

More than 20 employees of nine downtown jewellery businesses were arrested at the market last week as federal agents concluded a year-long nationwide investigation.

In all, 35 people — many of them Lebanese and Syrian nationals — were charged with conspiracy to sell and possess cocaine and to defraud the Internal Revenue Service. They face sentences of 10 years to life in prison if convicted.

What we have in essence is an organised crime case here," assistant U.S. attorney Russell Hayman said. "We have extended businesses using their power, resources and legitimacy to conceal very dangerous activities."

After a dozen years of rapid growth, the Los Angeles jewellery district is second only to New York in annual sales. But many merchants fear the drug money bust will hurt business.

"It's a disaster," said one merchant. "People are not going to come downtown any more."

Court papers depict a criminal enterprise as elaborate as many of the jewels sold in the market. Suspects allegedly used armoured trucks and automated cash counting machines.

Federal agents were tipped off to the enterprise early last year by an informant in New York and employees of Wells Fargo Bank in Los Angeles who told them that one firm had deposited \$25 million in a three-month period.

Investigators mounted a massive electronic surveillance operation of the jewellery stores. A video tape shown at a bail hearing for one defendant showed her working on stacks of cash one metre high.

According to the documents, two downtown businesses run by defendants Nazareth Andonian and Wanis Koyomejian were the lynchpin of the enterprise.

Drug traffickers allegedly shipped their proceeds to the two firms by armoured truck from Los Angeles, New York and Houston. Employees, often using the automated machines, would then count up and package the cash.

"They were counting money from dawn until dusk," Hayman said.

After the funds were deposited in various Los Angeles banks, they were wired to accounts in New York, Panama City and Montevideo, Uruguay, and then delivered to international drug traffickers in Colombia, prosecutors say.

Paris, Brussels compete to host commodity bodies

LONDON (R) — France and Belgium have offered inducements to try to lure the international sugar and wheat organisations away from London to set up their headquarters in Paris or Brussels.

Jean Parrotte, head of the International Wheat Council, said French and Belgian government officials had made attractive offers which would have to be looked at very carefully.

The wheat council, which groups 48 wheat producing and consuming nations, and the International Sugar Organisation, which has 56 member countries, are looking for a new headquarters when the lease on the premises they share in London runs out at the end of this year.

Soaring commercial rents in London mean they could face a three-fold increase in rent for

their building. The British government has so far refused to offer a subsidy so they will probably be forced to move after the end of 1989, officials from the two organisations said.

France is offering rent-free accommodation in Paris for five years, while Belgium is promising low, stable rent, with an element of subsidy.

London is also host to international coffee and cocoa organisations, which have just negotiated new leases on their joint headquarters to March 1991.

There is resistance to the wheat and sugar organisations leaving London while the cocoa and coffee organisations remain, because some member countries, like Brazil and Cuba, have the same people covering all four, officials said.

Air Afrique orders curbs on competitors

ABIDJAN (R) — Africa's multinational airline, Air Afrique, has told its competitors to cut back flights and limit passenger loads, an Air Afrique spokesman has said.

A letter containing the order has been sent to all competing airlines operating in West and Central Africa by the 10 governments that jointly own Air Afrique, the spokesman said.

The decision was taken at (Ivory Coast's inland capital) Yamoussoukro to reduce the number of flights by other companies," he added.

Heads of state from Air Afrique countries met in Yamoussoukro on Feb. 2 and approved a rescue plan for the heavily-indebted carrier proposed by France's foreign aid agency director Yves Roland-Billecart.

Airline sources said foreign companies had been given until November to reduce flights in and out of the region to one per week with no more than 100 passengers.

Companies in Ivory Coast that may have to cut flights to Europe to one from two include the Belgian airline Sabena, Spain's Iberia and Swissair.

Ethiopian Airlines has been asked to reduce its flights out of Ivory Coast to three from five, the sources added.

The Air Afrique spokesman said each shareholder government had issued the order in its own country. Air Afrique is owned by Ivory Coast, Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Wealth tax in Iran becomes controversy

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian proposals for a one-off wealth tax on millionaires which could raise \$14 billion are in limbo after objections by senior clergymen and lawyers, Tehran radio has reported.

It said the Guardian Council, composed of 12 Muslim theologians and lawyers who vet parliament's decisions, objected to the tax approved by parliament Wednesday.

It did not spell out the objections. The radio, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Finance Minister Mohammad Javad Aravani as saying Iran expected to raise one trillion rials (\$14 billion) from the "national cooperation tax for reconstruction."

He said the government was counting on the revenue for its budget in the next Iranian year beginning March 21.

"If it does not materialise, the budget deficit will increase by the same amount," the radio quoted him as saying.

Total government spending proposed for the next Iranian year is 3.856 trillion rials (\$55 billion). The budget bill, now in parliamentary committees, must be approved by March 21.

Tehran's Resalat Daily said last month budget deficit in the past several years had pushed the total internal debt to 10 trillion rials (\$140 billion).

Aravani said the aim of the tax was to channel resources from unproductive holdings to industrial and agricultural investment.

According to the bill passed in parliament, a progressive tax of up to 40 per cent would be imposed on anyone with his dependents owned assets of more than 100 million rials (\$14 million) on Sept. 23 last year.

Assets which would be assessed under the bill include pistachio and palm groves, fruit orchards and late-model cars. Cash holdings are exempted.

Aravani said about five people in every 1,000 would be affected by the tax.

Report sees deteriorating conditions in Bangladesh

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh will be even poorer next year as economic growth slows due to flooding and a worsening trade balance, a World Bank report says.

The confidential report said the economy, one of the world's poorest, would grow only 1.2 per cent in the fiscal year 1988/89 which started in July.

The government expects more than two per cent growth. "The disruptions caused by the floods (in 1988) and cyclone, to a lesser extent, will seriously affect economic growth again this year," the bank said.

"Although the government is making special efforts to assist the poor, the living standards of

the majority of the people in Bangladesh who are already quite poor, are likely to fall again this year," the report said.

A finance ministry official commented the economy might not be "as bad as the World Bank is predicting. We expect it to rebound, given a good natural and political climate."

Bangladesh's gross domestic product (GDP) measuring the total value of goods and services grew by two per cent in 1987/88, according to government figures.

The bank said food production would be three per cent below last year's level while jute, livestock, forestry and fisheries had also been affected by the floods.

Anglo-Dutch Unilever hikes '88 profits by 10%

LONDON (R) — Anglo-Dutch giant Unilever PLC-N.V. said Tuesday its pre-tax profits rose 10 per cent in 1988 to £1.45 billion (\$2.52 billion).

The group, whose products range from detergents to frozen foods, is one of the world's top consumer concerns. Its sales totalled £17.12 billion (\$29.79 billion) in 1988 against £16.55 billion (\$28.80 billion) the year before.

"1988 was another year of substantial progress throughout our business, reflecting our emphasis on profitable growth," Unilever Chairman Michael Angus said.

Unilever said internal growth remained its priority, though it

noted acquisitions during 1988 totalled \$630 million.

A number of strategic areas had been targeted for investment, including the skin care and fragrances markets.

Unilever earlier this month announced it was buying the Fabergé and Elizabeth Arden businesses for \$1.55 billion.

The purchase from the Riklis Family Corp. of the United States would add Fabergé, Brut, Aqueant, Elizabeth Arden and the prestigious Chloe and Lagerfeld perfumes to Unilever's range of brands and would pit it against L'Oréal of France for the number one position in the global personal products market.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 1989					
Central Bank official rates					
U.S. dollar	Buy	Sell	French franc	86.3	\$7.2
Pound Sterling	538.0	542.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	422.8	426.8
Deutschemark	933.7	943.6	Dutch guilder	360.4	363.1
Swiss franc	294.0	297.0	Swedish crown	35.4	36.2
	344.8	348.2	Italian lira (for 100)	39.9	40.3
			Belgian franc (for 10)	140.2	141.6

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling		U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.7392/7402	Canadian dollar	1.1995/2005
	1.8295/8302	Deutschemarks	2.0655/65
	2.0655/65	Dutch guilders	1.5600/10
	38.36/39	Swiss francs	6.2240/90
	6.2240/90	Belgian francs	1349/1350
	1349/1350	French francs	127.30/40
	127.30/40	Italian lire	6.2975/3025
	6.2975/3025	Japanese yen	6.7050/7100
	6.7050/7100	Swedish crowns	7.1275/1325
	7.1275/1325	Norwegian crowns	7.1275/1325
One ounce of gold	386.50/387.00	Danish crowns	
		U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Brisk trading in resources stocks underpinned a revival on the Australian share market as the weaker local currency encouraged offshore investors. The All-Ordinaries Index rose 13.0 to 1,483.4.

TOKYO — Share prices fell sharply in late trade, with the main Nikkei Index posting its biggest drop this year, to end below 32,000 for the first time since last Tuesday. It fell 300.17 to 31,985.60.

HONG KONG — Prices tested lows in lively trade with sentiment fragile on fears of interest rate rises and overseas market performance. The Hang Seng was down 50.50 at 3,012.68.

SINGAPORE — Nervousness over interest rate increases and the poor performance of major overseas bourses sparked stoploss selling, pushing prices sharply lower.

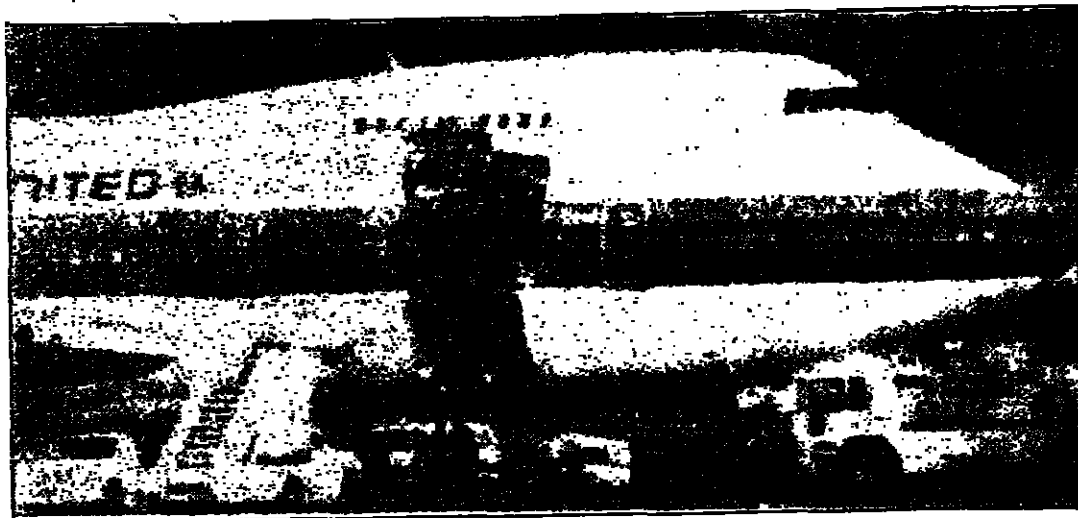
BOMBAY — Share prices attracted scattered profit-taking in volatile pre-budget trading as investors preferred to limit their positions, brokers said.

FRANKFURT — Shares ended a moderate broadly firmer as the market's worries about higher domestic interest rates recorded. The Dax Index closed at 1,288.66, 11.86 points up from Monday's close.

ZURICH — Shares closed firmer across the board as fresh demand at Monday's sharply lower levels drove up prices. The All-Share Swiss Index added 6.6 points to 955.6.

PARIS — Shares ended at day's highs in moderate trading, buoyed by shortcovering on blue chips but with activity centred on Cie du Midi and BSN. The 50-share indicator ended 2.35 per cent up.

LONDON —



The United Airlines Jumbo jet rests on a runway at Honolulu airport after it lost a cargo flight Friday.

Midair blast 747 had power-snagged door

HONOLULU (R) — The Boeing 747 cargo door that blew open over the Pacific, sucking nine people to their deaths, had an electrical fault in December and trouble with a door seal in January, federal investigators said.

The nine were among 354 people aboard United Airlines Flight 811 when the hole opened up in the passenger cabin 6,700 metres above the Pacific Ocean last Friday. The jetliner, on a flight to New Zealand, returned to Honolulu.

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator Lee Dickinson told a news conference Monday night that the 19-year-old jumbo jet's maintenance records had revealed the two previous faults with the forward cargo door.

Dickinson would not elaborate on the significance of the finding but federal investigators said Sunday they were looking at the possibility the right forward cargo door opened in flight, ripping open a section of the fuselage.

In Sydney, a United Airlines 747 bound for Honolulu was delayed for 18 hours over Monday night with cargo door problems.

United Airlines spokesman Sean McNamara said inspectors in Sydney had found a faulty pin in a rear cargo door of the 747-100 jet, the same class as the one in Friday's incident.

The Boeing company, meanwhile, has advised airlines to test the locking system on all 747 cargo doors, a spokesman for the aircraft builder in Seattle said Monday. David Jimenez said the advisory "was nothing more than a prudent action."

The New York Times reported that the U.S. airline industry would issue a report Tuesday



Investigators pore over the wreckage as United Airlines employees unload baggage from the Boeing 747 jet.

calling for the most sweeping repair programme on ageing airliners in commercial aviation, involving as many as 1,000 commercial jets and costing hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Air Transport Association has been working since last summer on the report to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Its release so soon after the United Airlines accident was coincidental, the newspaper said.

The report says as many as 200 repairs must be made to some 700 Boeing jets, including 747s of similar age and service record to the United 747 involved in Friday's accident, and to Boeing 727s and 737s, it said.

Bush passes Asia test with flying colours

TOKYO (AP) — With few exceptions, officials and newspapers in the Far East rated U.S. President George Bush's fast-paced visit to the region a success in showing the importance of his new administration puts on relations with Asian countries.

Bush returned to Washington Monday night after a five-day swing to Japan, China and South Korea, his first overseas trip as president.

Commentators in Asia remarked that it was the first time a new president has visited Asia before Europe, and said the trip was extraordinary in coming so early in Bush's tenure.

The official Xinhua news agency in China called it an "unusual diplomatic initiative" and said, "China looks large in Bush's foreign policy. Over the years, he has attached importance to China's role in world affairs and cared for the expansion of U.S.-China relations."

In Tokyo, Bush met leaders of 20 foreign countries in the swirl of "funeral diplomacy" among dignitaries paying respects to the late Emperor Hirohito.

His stop in Seoul let him reassert the U.S. determination to maintain its troop strength in

South Korea and support for democratic reforms. And in Peking, his presence lent a counterbalance to the warming of Sino-Soviet relations.

"His visit... clearly indicates the importance the Bush administration attaches to Asia," the liberal-leaning Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun said in an editorial.

Bush's talks covered hot spots like the Korean peninsula and Kampuchea as well as the softer issues of trade imbalances and human rights, with a notable flap in Peking when Chinese police prevented dissident Fang Lizhi from attending a banquet to which Bush had invited him.

The Chinese, while saying Bush's visit would enhance Sino-U.S. friendship, were angry at what they saw as U.S. interference in their affair.

Communist Party Secretary General Zhao Ziyang said, "The fact that some Americans support those Chinese who are not satisfied with the Chinese government will be detrimental not only to China's political stability and the progress of its reforms but also to the Sino-U.S. friendship."

The conservative Hong Kong daily, South China Morning Post,



George Bush

said Bush had been ill-advised to invite Fang. "It was a rash and provocative gesture," its editorial said.

"China, in turn, overreacted foolishly by physically ensuring that the outspoken activist was not able to attend," it said.

In Thailand, the conservative English-language Bangkok Post said Fang incident showed that China was as authoritarian now as in the 1970s when Bush served as U.S. envoy to Peking. It also showed the Americans "that their road to Chinese favour is just as bumpy as that of the Russians," the Bangkok Post said.

EC backs Central American peace plan, pledges more aid

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras (R) — European Community (EC) ministers meeting with their Central American counterparts have backed a regional peace plan and said the EC intends to increase aid to the five governments.

Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez said at the start of the two-day meeting Monday there would be "substantial progress in the aid of the 12 (EC states) to this region" if economic forecasts hold true.

Fernandez, spokesman for the EC Council of Ministers, also spoke out in support of the plan to end civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, but said: "It is not enough to arrive at accords, it is necessary to comply with them."

A draft final declaration supports an accord in El Salvador this month by Central American presidents, who agreed to draw up a plan by mid-May to disband the U.S.-backed rebel army camped in Honduras in return for democratic reforms in Nicaragua.

The document says EC aid will be given "without exclusions" to help economic development in all

five nations.

The aid pledge was criticised by the contras, who have been fighting a U.S.-backed war against the leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

Wilfred Montalvan, one of seven contra rebel leaders, arrived Monday to urge the EC to withhold aid to Nicaragua until Managua kept promises of democracy.

Otherwise, he said, the Sandinistas would "consolidate a totalitarian regime, violating human rights and damaging to legitimate interests... of neighbouring countries," he told Reuters.

U.S. sceptical

U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle said in Washington at the weekend he believed Nicaragua would violate the El Salvador accord.

Quayle said the Nicaraguan

government was Marxist-Leninist and did not intend to surrender power despite President Daniel Ortega's promises, made at the El Salvador summit, of democracy and free elections by Feb. 25, 1990.

Honduran President Jose Azcona said in an opening address there was now a transition from armed struggle to peaceful struggle in the Central America.

"We are not going to give up our guns until there is democracy in Nicaragua," he added.

The EC is due to back a Central American request for 150 million European Currency Units (ECUs) (\$172 million) to help revive trade in the region, depressed by wars in which 100,000 have died, but without firmly committing the cash.

Fernandez said 1988 aid was 112 million ECUs (\$130 million). Bilateral aid from the 12 nations exceeded \$350 million.

The 12 nations will also agree to study a request for a \$200 million fund to help the Central American Bank for Economic Integration.

EC aid in Central America is small compared with U.S. support of El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Guatemala or Soviet aid to Nicaragua.

Managua lashes out

Nicaragua lashed out at the United States and Britain Monday for remarks made by officials from both countries attending the conference.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto and Ricardo Wheelock, head of Sandinista intelligence, responded angrily to comments made to reporters earlier by U.S. ambassador to Honduras Everett Briggs and British delegate Timothy Eggar.

Briggs, in a reference to Nicaragua, joked to reporters that a Honduran friend had described the Central American governments as "five brothers, the problem is that one of them does not bath."

D'Escoto retorted that "not only does he (Briggs) never bath, but neither does he wash his mouth before speaking. For that reason we have the dirty war."

35 killed in Sri Lankan village massacre

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Tamil guerrillas shot and hacked to death 35 civilians of Sri Lanka's majority Sinhalese community in an attack on a village Monday night, military sources said.

Guerrillas armed with guns, swords and knives stormed Borawewa in the north-central province, the sources said, adding they suspected the rebels belonged to the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Five people were injured.

The sources said 16 more bodies were found in the jungle Tuesday morning after initial police reports said 19 had been killed in the attack.

Nine children and four

women were among the dead, some of whom were cut to pieces. Police said there were about 30 attackers.

The Tigers group is fighting for an independent homeland in northern and eastern areas for the minority Tamil community.

Police said one soldier was wounded when troops from a nearby camp who rushed to the village on hearing gunfire stumbled over a landmine.

Four people were killed Monday in the south where left-wing Sinhalese rebels are fighting to overthrow the government, police said.

The LTTE has rejected a peace accord signed by Sri Lanka and India aimed at en-

ding the Tamil revolt and is continuing an armed campaign to set up an independent homeland.

Borawewa village lies on the border of the Batticaloa district which is part of the area in the island's north and east claimed by the Tamils.

About 45,000 Indian troops have been deployed in the two regions under the accord to disarm the Tigers.

Police sources said the Tigers have a training camp near the village.

On Feb. 11, 36 Sinhalese were shot and stabbed to death in Duturawa. On Feb. 22, seven Sinhalese were killed at Sinhapura.

The Tigers' information

office in London denied the first two attacks were the work of their people.

A Tiger leader who denied his men were behind the Borawewa killings said: "These killings are being done by armed groups who want to discredit our just struggle on behalf of the Tamil people."

Speaking to the AP on condition of anonymity, he added: "They are being done to give the Indian occupational forces and the Sri Lankan army and police a right to kill Tamils living in eastern province, a part of the Tamil homeland."

A former Tamil rebel leader from a rival group claimed the Tigers were on "a headline-hunting exercise."

Serbs march as troops patrol Kosovo

BELGRADE (R) — Thousands of chanting Serbian demonstrators marched on Tuesday after striking ethnic Albanian miners in Kosovo forced the resignations of three pro-Serbian politicians in the province.

Troops and tanks were deployed throughout Kosovo early Tuesday as the miners ended an eight-day underground sit-in.

A Reuters correspondent in Kosovo, one of two autonomous provinces within Serbia, said tanks and trucks carrying troops were on the move on all major roads in the province throughout Monday night.

Protesters chanting "Kosovo is

Serbia" poured into Belgrade's Marx and Engels Square to mass in front of parliament. They carried Yugoslav, Serbian and Communist Party flags and demanded that Yugoslav state President Raif Dizdarevic and party chief Stipe Sudaric address them.

Scores of flag-draped taxis, their horns blaring, drove in columns through the city.

The miners at the Mitrovica zinc mine, 180 kilometres south of Belgrade, sparked off a general strike in Kosovo against plans to increase Serbian control over the province which borders Albania.

Although they ended their strike Monday night, turmoil persisted in the province and Yugos-

lavia's state presidency ordered troops in Monday to protect "constitutional order, law and order, property and personal security."

About 8,000 students maintained a mass sit-in at a sports complex in the Kosovo capital Pristina Tuesday and Serbian and Montenegrin workers have begun rival protests.

Regional rows have reached boiling point in Yugoslavia with the northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia accusing Serbian Communist Party leader Slobodan Milosevic of trying to create a centralist, Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

The miners won the resigna-

tions of Kosovo party chief Rahman Morina, Pristina party boss Husamedin Azemi and Ali Sukrija, a member of the Yugoslav Central Committee.

The resignations were a major blow to Milosevic who had backed Azemi and Morina.

The Belgrade demonstrators opposed the resignations, saying the three men were forced to resign because they had cracked down on Albanian nationalism.

Thousands of Serbs have fled Kosovo since ethnic Albanian riots in 1981, alleging persecution by the Albanians who outnumber the Serbs and Montenegrins by 1.7 million to only 200,000.

Unique election system to pick Malaysia's next king

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — In the only election of its kind in the world, the nine state rulers of Malaysia go to the polls Wednesday to elect by secret ballot one of their number to be king for a five-year term.

Because the rulers follow an established practice in rotating the office among them, government officials, politicians and diplomats are predicting confidently that Sultan Azlan Shah, who is the present deputy king, will be elected the next king.

They also say the ruler of Negri Sembilan Sultan Tuanku Jaafar Abdul Rahman, 67, will likely be elected the deputy king.

The present king is Sultan Mahmud Iskandar of Johore state.

Sultan Azlan, 60, is the ruler of Perak state, the world's richest

tin mining area. He passed his law examinations in England before engaging in a long career in the legal service. He was lord president of the supreme court, the highest ranking judge in Malaysia, before ascending the Perak throne in February 1987.

The sources, who asked to remain unidentified, said so far the rulers have never deviated from the practice of electing the deputy king as the next king.

It has also been custom to elect as deputy king the most senior member of the state rulers, who are all Muslims and heads of the Islamic religion in their states. The practice gives each state a chance to have one of its state rulers elected king.

Females cannot ascend to state thrones.

In the election, which govern-

ment officials say is the only one of its kind in the world, the rulers meet every five years at the national palace in the capital.

The name of the most senior member is written on a sheet of white paper and one by one, the rulers take a sheet of paper and mark with the same pen "yes" or "no" boxes.

The ballots are then dropped into a box, and the keeper of the rulers seal counts them and announces if the name on the ballot has been elected. No detailed breakdown of votes is given.

The same procedure is followed to elect the new deputy king. The method of electing the king began just after the nation won independence from Britain in 1957. The next king will be the ninth.



Oliver North

Fresh snags hit North trial

WASHINGTON (R) — The Iran-contras trial of former White House aide Oliver North failed to get through a full week of testimony before hitting a snag in the first of many expected disputes over classified documents.

A key concern in the former marine's criminal trial has been protecting U.S. National Security secrets and the identity of some foreign officials.

Trial judge Gerhard Gesell sent jurors home early Monday and met with attorneys for both sides in an hour-long closed session after an in-court wrangle over the introduction of a "for your eyes only" memorandum sent to North from his contra courier, Robert Owen.

The Aug. 25, 1985 memo detailed plans to build an airstrip in Costa Rica.

A heavily-censored copy of the memo made available to the press showed that 10 names had been deleted and replaced with the words "a Costa Rican official."

In explaining the legal delay to the jury, Gesell said the court had agreed to withhold some names. "The facts will all come out but you don't need to know the names," he said.

COLUMN 1000000

Twin hippos get christened

MEMPHIS, Tennessee (AP) — Twin hippos were christened "Splash" and "Splish" at a weekend party at the Memphis zoo with 18 other sets of twins — of the two-legged variety. The names were picked by actress Cybill Shepherd, a Memphis native and mother of twins herself, from more than 2,300 suggestions entered in a contest. The 36.3-kilogram babies were born two months ago, but their gender has not yet been determined because their mother, Julie, will not let zookeepers close enough to her offspring. Julie was not forgotten on her babies' big day. She was given a certificate of membership in the Royal Order of Mothers of Twins from Ellen Patrick, president of the Mothers of Twins "plus" Club. The excitement ended when Julie nudged her babies into their pool for an underwater feeding. The father, Ubie, remained submerged in an adjoining pool through the entire ceremony.

Cheap dinner attracts thousands

TOKYO (AP) — Thousands of people jammed a restaurant in Tokyo that sold \$15 steak dinners for 55 yen, or \$0.42 to celebrate its 55th anniversary. Lines began forming outside the Suehiro Restaurant in the Ginza shopping district three hours before the steak house opened late Sunday morning. Three hours before the 10 p.m. closing time, 8,000 people had enjoyed a steak dinner, and the total was expected to reach more than 30,000 before the three-day offer ended Tuesday, said one restaurant official, Masao Moriyasu. The bargain dinner included 196 grammes of imported beef, salad and rice. The restaurant usually serves about 3,000 people a day, he said.

Thief gets away with timely treasure

BALTIMORE, Maryland (AP) — A collection of 18th century pocket watches that filled a case at the Baltimore Museum of Art has been stolen, officials reported. The antique English pocket watches, valued at about \$150,000, are believed to have been stolen in a 45-minute period Saturday afternoon, said Brenda Richardson, the museum's deputy director. She said the watches, most bequeathed to the museum in 1931, are gold; many are enameled and a few decorated with diamonds or pearls, although some have imitation jewellery. Richardson said she was optimistic about recovering them "because there was physical evidence" found by police and "because there were a lot of people in the museum." The display case in the European decorative arts gallery was pried open. It had been "very well secured," Richardson said.

Images of bread light up France

PARIS (AP) — Light images of French bread, the same kind that starving peasants killed for 200 years ago during a famine, will be projected against the national assembly building for 10 days starting Saturday. Designed by French artist Henri Chazou, the light images of oversized baguettes and of fat, round loaves of country-style bread, will shimmer between the Greek-style columns of the building's exterior, evoking what many historians consider as one of the major factors leading to the 1789 revolution — famine. Huge projectors installed on the Place de la Concorde across the Seine will illuminate the buff-coloured stone of the newly cleaned national assembly from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. The project is the third in a 10-part series commemorating the bicentennial of the building as a backdrop.

Condor lays egg after clumsy courting

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A California condor laid an egg after weeks of amorous but clumsy courting, and scientists hope it will be fertile and produce a chick to bolster population of the greatly endangered species. The egg was noticed Monday after Los Angeles zoo researchers reviewed a videotape of activity in the condor's 2.4-by-2.4 metres plywood nest box and briefly saw it as the condor couple trooped places from the nest to the outside. The couple, a male condor named Cuyama and a female named Cachuana, picked the interest of observers Sunday when they showed signs indicating an egg-laying was near.

Mountain village chefs tickle palates worldwide

By Paul Holmes
Reuters

VILLA SANTA MARIA, Italy — Each year, an elite band of newly-trained chefs sets out from a village deep in the Apennine mountains to tickle palates around the world.

They are graduates of the state cookery school of Villa Santa Maria, a village of 1,800 people that has been producing outstanding chefs for four centuries.

Ten per cent of the 120 members of the "Collegium Coquorum" — the honoured club of Italy's foremost living chefs — are from Villa Santa Maria, a village that clings to a rock face in the harsh, isolated Abruzzi region of central Italy.

Some 40 per cent of the village's total male working population are chefs or waiters — almost all working elsewhere and many of them cook-

ing for or serving at the tables of the rich, royal and powerful at homes and hotels in Italy and beyond.

Many village families are culinary dynasties with names renowned throughout the profession.

The late Emperor Hirohito of Japan had a chef from Villa Santa Maria, in common with the Swedish royal house, American cartoon king Walt Disney and Giovanni Agnelli, head of Italy's giant Fiat motor company.

Domenico "papa" Stanziani, 70, doyen of Villa Santa Maria's chefs, prepared gastronomic delights for Italy's last two reigning kings and can trace a chef in his family back to 1789.

He boasts a 60-year career that began in the kitchens of a princess and is now head chef at Villa Santa Maria's school, where 300 boys from as young

as 14 spend between three and five years learning from his lifetime of experience.

"My father was also a chef and almost every family here has a chef or *maitre d'hôtel* (head waiter) in it. It's become something in our blood," said Stanziani.

As he spoke his class of 18 high-hatted apprentices in white aprons carefully filled parcels of freshly-made pasta with a forcemeat of veal, spinach, parmesan cheese and nutmeg for cooking in a light cream sauce.

The dish, tortellini alla crema, was for a five-course lunch the class was preparing — to be tested on the critical taste buds of senior staff.

Stanziani heads 10 teaching chefs at the school — one of them his nephew Antonio — which director Vincenzo Liberti said consistently ranked

academies in Italy.

"When you hear the name Villa Santa Maria it is a symbol of quality," said Liberti.

The school's strength is Italian cuisine with its wide regional variations although it also teaches other countries' traditions. Antonio Stanziani is an acknowledged expert on cookery of the Abruzzi — a region famed in Italy for its outstanding game and earthy, rustic dishes.

Most pupils are Italians though the school, which first opened in 1936, has trained chefs from Burma, the United States, Japan, Gabon, West Germany and Belgium in recent years.

One current pupil is Canadian and students and staff will spend a week in Moscow in April demonstrating their skills.

Why Villa Santa Maria should be such a chefs' para-

dise is shrouded in legend. But for centuries there has been little else to occupy man in an area of mountains and rocky soil that has fought a winning battle against cultivation.

"When I was a child there was nothing else to do," said Domenico Stanziani. "We all found a way to get out to Naples, Rome, the big cities, and it was cooking."

Liberti and others in the village date the tradition back to Saint Francesco Caracciolo, the son of a local noble family born in 1563 who shunned the rich life for Catholic devotion.

Other noble families would flock to the Caracciolo summer hunting retreat in Villa Santa Maria in the saint's day "not because of the hunting but because of the particularly tasty way the game was cooked by the servants," said Liberti.

The Italian Chefs' Federation wants Saint Francesco to